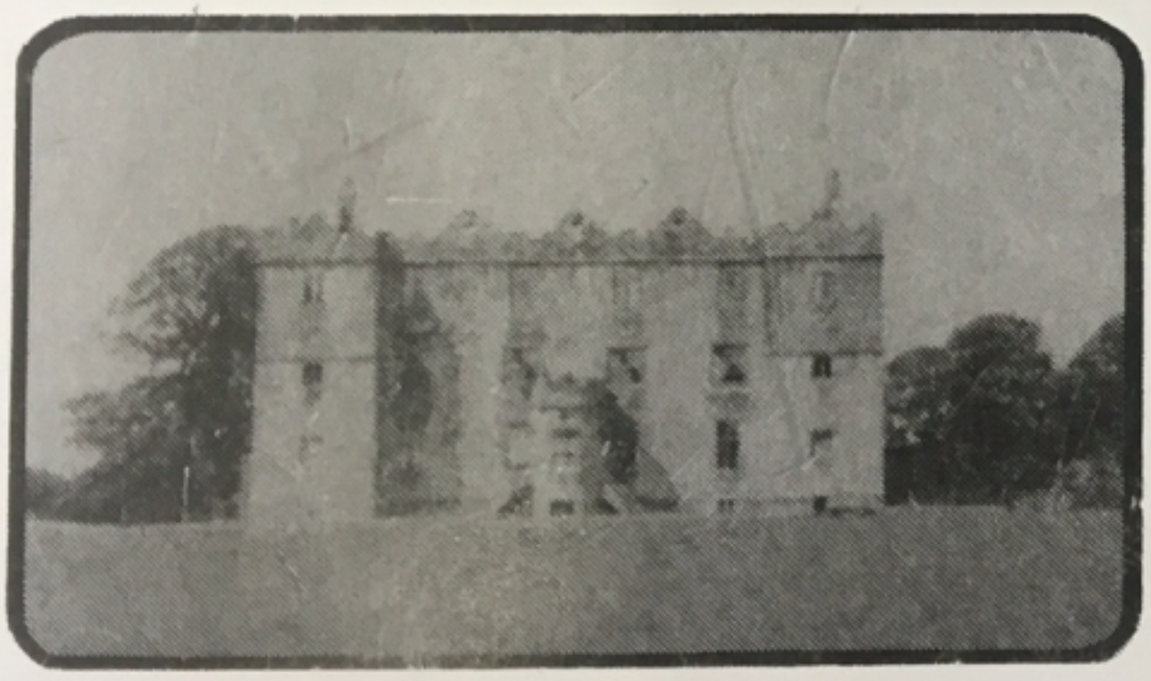
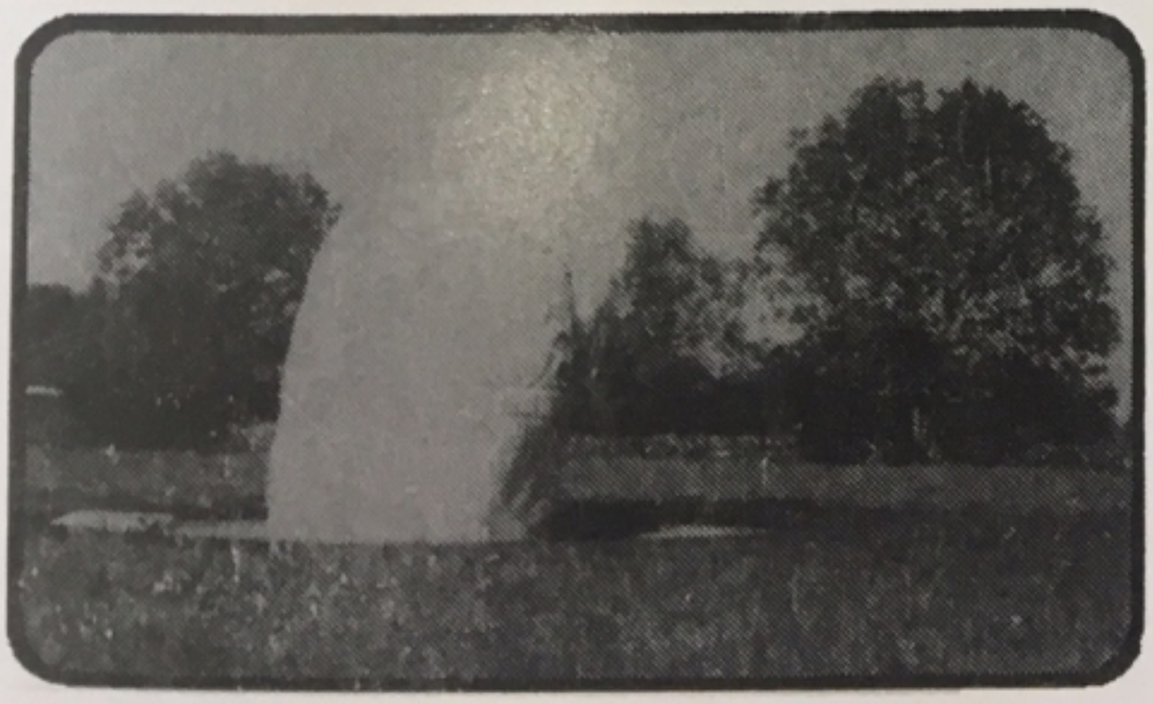
A Forgotten Campaign

AND ASPECTS OF THE HERITAGE OF SOUTH EAST GALWAY





EDITED BY MICHAEL SHIEL AND DESMOND ROCHE

Acknowledgements

A BOOK such as this is of necessity made up from the contributions of many people. In this case we have been particularly fortunate in being able to call upon so many distinguished experts in different fields, but all with one common bond — their connection with South-East Galway. Tom Feeney, Portumna, and Anne Finnegan O'Maille, Loughrea produced the two great pioneering studies on the Land War in South-East Galway and the Woodford Evictions respectively, and we thank them both for making their extensive research available to us. Dr. P. K. Egan, P.P., whose father and uncle took prominent parts in the land war, and Sergeant Michael McMahon both well-known authors in the historical and archeological fields, and living in Portumna, gave generously of their knowledge and experience. At present living in Dublin, but natives of the Woodford area, are contributors Tomas O Gormain, Seamus McEneany and Eighneachan O Laighin, all of whom have a deep interest and expertise in its history and background. 'Honest' John Roche and 'Sterling' Pat Keary were two of the most prominent leaders of the tenants in the 1880's, and we are again fortunate in having contributions from the grandson of the first, Desmond Roche, and the two great-grandsons of the other, Raymond and Brian Keary. Tom Page, great grandson of Thomas Saunders (of 'Saunders Fort' fame), worked diligently to tap the memories of John Slattery of Clonmoylan, and some other locals along the Shannon-side with fruitful results. The former P.P. of Woodford, Fr. James Shiel, together with teachers Frank Mullen, Marian Lyons-Hynes, Martin Fahy and Sister Patricia Monaghan, all gave us the fruits of their labours and knowledge of local history. We wish to thank the Walshe family, Allendarra, for permission to publish some verses written by the recently deceased author, Mary Elizabeth Flannery; also various other writers, publishers and newspapers for the use of excerpts and photographs, including The National Library and Folklore Commission. Many other people helped in various ways in supplying material for the book. It would be difficult to name everybody, and the editor wishes to express his thanks to all. One person, however, who must be thanked particularly is Rev. Cathal Stanley, C.C., Killeen, who not alone supplied an enormous amount of material, but was the inspiration and kingpin of the whole effort. Last, but by no means least, we wish to thank most sincerely Monsignor Louis Page, P.P., Fahy and Quansboro, Vicar-General of Clonfert diocese, a native of Gurteeny and Patron of the Woodford Heritage Group, for his gracious foreword, happily written in our native language, which encapsulates the spirit of the book so well.

M. J. Shiel, Editor.

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Contents

Page

A FORGOTTEN CAMPAIGN AND WHY? — *Cathal Stanley* 1
LAND TENURE IN IRELAND — *M. J. Shiel* 7
CLANRICARDES AND BURKES — *Tomás Ó Gormáin* 11
LORD CLANRICARDE — *Desmond Roche* 13
PORTUMNA, A MILITARY EXPEDITION — *M. J. Shiel* 20
THE SIEGE OF SAUNDERS FORT
Tom Feeney and Anne Finnegan Ó Maille 22
SAUNDERS FORT MAKES WORLD NEWS — *Pall Mall Gazette* 28
THE BALLAD OF TOMMY LARKIN, A PROFILE — *Cathal Stanley.*
..... 30
BISHOP DUGGAN OF CLONFERT — *P. K. Egan* 32
MATT HARRIS AND JOHN DILLON — *Cathal Stanley* 35
PRIESTS IN THE PLAN OF CAMPAIGN — *P. K. Egan* 41
C. S. PARNELL AND THE LAND QUESTION
C. C. O'Brien and T. S. H. Lyons 47
G. SHAW-LEFEVRE M.P. — *P. K. Egan* 51
MEMORIES OF GALWAY JAIL
W. S. Blunt, P. Keary, D. Roche 52
W. S. BLUNT REMEMBERS WOODFORD — *M. J. Shiel* 56
THE BURKES OF MARBLE HILL — *Thomas Gorman* 62
MONTANA REMINISCENSES AND PRESS REPORTS
Seamus McEneny 67
THE LEWIS — ALWARDS OF BALLYNAGAR — *Marion Lyons* 69
MAUDE GONNE McBRIDE AND DOC TULLY — *Autobiography* .. 76
DOC TULLY'S EVICTION — *Frank Mullen* 78
JOHN ROCHE M.P. — *Desmond Roche* 80
WILLIAM O'BRIEN M.P. — *Desmond Roche* 88
THE PORTUMNA RENT COLLECTION — *William O'Brien* 89
A NAVAL EXPEDITION TO CLONDAGEOFF — *William Hurlbert* . 90
EVICTION MEMORIES FROM SHANNONSIDE — *Tom Page* 95
LISTS OF EVICTED TENANTS, PRISONERS, LEADERS AND
POLICE STATIONS — *John Slattery* 99
CHRONOLOGY OF THE LAND WAR (1848-1886)
Cathal Stanley 105

(continued overleaf)

PART 2

GEOLOGY OF S.E. GALWAY AND EAST CLARE
— *Raymond Keary* 111
BY AUGHTY'S SLOPES — *Michael MacMahon* 113
THE MEDIEVAL PARISH OF BALLINAKILL — *P. K. Egan P.P.* ... 120
POPULATION TRENDS — *Brian Keary* 126
DERRYBRIEN — *Seán Ó Ceallaigh* 128
THE TUROE STONE — *Michael MacMahon* 131
THE MIRACULOUS KILCORBAN MADONNA
— *Cathal Stanley C.C. and Marion Lyons* 131
DERRYHIVENY CASTLE — *Michael MacMahon* 134
THE VISIT OF JOHN STEVENS JOCOBITE ARMY IRON
WORKS AND MIRACLES — *Tomás Ó Gormáin* 136
THE RIBBONMEN OF SLIABH AUGHTY
— *Cathal Stanley C.C. and Marion Lyons* 145
THE 'ULTACHS' — *Seamus McEneny* 151
NAMES — PEOPLE AND PLACES — *Tomás Ó Gormáin* 157
THE FAMINE IN LOUGHREA A POOR LAW UNION
— *Michael MacMahon* 161
LOGAINMEACHA AGUS SEANCHAS NA GRÁIGE
— *Eighaeachan Ó Laighin* 167
THE G.A.A. AND NATIONALISM IN EAST GALWAY
— *Sam Stanley* 170
FLORA AND NATURAL HISTORY — *Thomas Gorman* 176
HEDGE SCHOOLS — *Michael MacMahon* 178
TRADITIONAL MUSIC IN EAST GALWAY — *Martin Fahy* 179
LOCAL TRADITIONS — *Tomás Ó Gormáin* 184
BIBLIOGRAPHY 189

A Word to the Reader 1886 - 1986

One hundred years ago East Galway erupted in what developed into the final phase of the Land War. It was a momentuous year for the common people of the area and in particular for those who were tenants of the estates of Lewis, Burke and Clanricarde. They were not alone in their struggle. In Cork, Kerry, Clare, Mayo, Sligo and Donegal, there had been - and still were - confrontations, evictions, prosecutions and prison sentences, as the Establishment tried to hold back the rising tide of discontent, that was rapidly developing into a seething rage against the unjust land tenure system, which made the small and usually poverty-stricken tenant little more than a serf, subject to the whims of his master.

1886 however saw the struggle in East Galway reach world headlines. The siege of "Saunders' Fort" in August, and the launching of the 'Plan of Campaign' in October of that year, were two of the highlights associated with the little town of Woodford and reported internationally. The former demonstrated to the world as never before, the ruthlessness and power of an obstinate and callous absentee landlord, against his determined and exasperated tenantry. The latter marked the channelling of the spirit of resistance into a constructive, well organised and effective movement. The reaction of the general public to the one, and the unity and disciplined committment shown by the tenants in the other, were important factors in the chain of events which finally broke the power of the landlords in Ireland and gave the land back to its people i.e. only 3% in 1870 owned the land they occupied, and 65% by 1916, surely the greatest revolution in Irish history?

The different aspects of the struggle have been ably and copiously documented in many books, pamphlets, newspaper reports etc., and it is not intended in this book to attempt to repeat such comprehensive treatment. Rather are the following pages designed to introduce readers to the South-East Galway area, centred in Woodford, and to direct the light of history and folklore on its people and the land they lived in. They are an attempt to explain why Woodford sprang into the centre stage, and the circumstances which spurred people to resist landlords and government, and to endure hardship, imprisonment and in many cases the loss of their holdings by eviction.

It is hoped in this way to excite local and national interest in the area and in the land war period, and to rally support for the various lectures, visits, exhibitions and further publications which, it is intended, will mark the centenary of this stirring year, including the Festival Commemoration in South-East Galway from August 14th to 21st, 1986.

Towards the end of 1886 the 'Special Commissioner' of the 'Pall Mall Gazette' (in fact its famous Editor, W.T. Stead) wrote; '... all over Ireland, 'Woodford' has been the watchword of agitation, and ... the whole story of it [landlordism in Ireland] from first to last is bound up with the Clanricarde estate. Alike in glory and in shame, the Clanricardes have played a leading part in the great drama of foreign domination, and it would be but in keeping with all that has passed that it should be in a war against Clanricarde that the Irish revolution of our day should win its final and its crowning victory'.

EDITOR

RÉAMHRÁ

Is dual go mbeadh cion agus grá ag duine ar an áit inar rugadh agus inar tógadh é, agus go mbeadh suim aige inar tharla ann san am a caitheadh. Dá bhrí sin, measaim go mbeidh fáilte mhór roimh an leabhar seo í nGaillimh thiar agus go mor mhór ag muintir Ghráig na Muilte Iarainn, pé áit a bhfuil cónaí orthu, sa bhaile nó i gcéin.

Séard atá ann bailiúchán aistí ar chuid de scéal agus de sheanchas an pharóiste stairiúil seo, atá suite idir Loch Deirgeirt agus Sliabh Eachta in Oirthear na Gaillimhe.

I gcuimhne ar ar tharla sa taobh tíre seo céad bliain ó shin a cinneadh ar an leabhar cuimhneacháim seo a chur le chéile. Sin í an bhliain (1886), a tosaíodh ar na tionóntaí a chur as seilbh a gcuid gabháltas ag na tiarnaí talún a bhí i réim san am. Is mór an cruatan agus an t-anró a d'fhulaing mórán daoine, a sheas an fód in aghaidh ne héagóra a shíl siad a bhí an tiarna talún a imirt orthu, agus iad ag iarraidh greim a choinneáil ar a gcuid gabháltas.

Ach, buíochas mór le Dia, tháinig athrú saoil le himeacht aimsire. Is mór idir inné agus inniu. B'éigean do na tiarnaí talún géilleadh indeireadh na dála, agus tugadh cothrom ne Féinne do na daoine a fágadh gan teach gan treabh gan díon os a gcionn de bharr a seasaimh ar son a gceart.

Is ceart dúinne, san lá atá inniu ann, bheith buíoch de na daoine sin a throid in aghaidh na héagóra san am úd, gur briseadh ar chumhacht na dtiarnaí talún agus gur baineadh ceart agus cothrom amach don tionónta as a dheireadh.

Is iomaí rud sa leabhar seo a mbainfidh muintir na Gráige agus Gaillimh thiar eolas agus taitneamh as, agus, go deimhin, daoine eile chomh maith ar fud nd hÉireann agus i gcéin.

Fearaim fíorchaoin fáilte roimhe, agus gúim beannacht Dé ar lucht a scríofa agus ar luch a léite.

Lughaidh Mac Giolla, V.G.
S.P. Faiche.

A Forgotten Campaign and Why?

THIS BOOK is not only intended as a centenary commemoration of the Plan of Campaign (1886-1986), but also an attempt to focus attention on this most neglected chapter of Irish history, i.e. the second phase of the Land War. The general reader will probably have already heard of The Land League (1879), the first Home Rule Bill (1886), C. S. Parnell and the Divorce Case (1890) which led to a split in the Irish Party at Westminster, but little if anything about The Plan of Campaign. There are various reasons for this neglect, which I shall try to outline in the (a) first paragraph, before attempting to (b) evaluate the importance and real significance of The Plan of Campaign itself, and its achievements. Finally in the (c) last paragraph, on **why** this campaign was launched in East-Galway and Woodford a hundred years ago.

(a) Bibliographical Reasons for Neglect?

A glance through the select bibliography at the end will quickly provide the immediate cause for the neglect, namely that nearly all the biographical and autobiographical books were written so long ago, that they are practically all out of print. Worse still they are extremely hard to obtain, because they are so rare and valuable, with no immediate signs of any reprint or revised editons. The personal recollections of Michael Davitt 1904, William O'Brien 1905, Tim Healy 1928, T. P. O'Connor 1929, and John Devoy 1929, are all vital accounts of the whole land war period, since all five were prominent leaders and actively involved at the very highest levels.

Nevertheless, they were all written long after the events they describe, and consequently they often differ on the details of some incidents, meetings, or on the exact words uttered at the time. Thus we have to depend all the more on the contemporary memories of two English gentlemen, G. Shaw Le Fevre (1888) and Wilfrid S. Blunt (published in 1912, but based on a diary of the time) and the American W. H. Hurlbert (1888), though as visitors to Ireland, they did not experience events from the inside, as did the previous authors; all these are long out of print and now almost unobtainable.

Likewise, with the lives of the clerical leaders of that era, again all written since 1921, including Fr. Brett's biography of Bishop Duggan, an illuminating insight into his inspiring pioneering role in both the embryonic G.A.A., and the struggle for the land. Non-clerical leaders have fared somewhat better, but again only in more recent times, with the valuable studies of David Thornley (Isaac Butt 1964), F. S. L. Lyons, (John Dillon 1968), Conor Cruise O'Brien (C. S. Parnell 1971), and T. W. Moody's Davitt (1982) — though only taking his life story to 1882. The latter is an invaluable account of phase one of the Land War (1875 to 1882), and his masterly bibliography illustrates the tremendous amount of research being done by modern historians, even though little of it is as yet available to the average reader.

While there have been several biographies of C. S. Parnell previously, C. C.

O'Brien's was the pioneering comprehensive work on the Irish leader and the Parliamentary Party, with F. S. L. Lyons later providing a major critical re-assessment in 1978, in addition to his excellent study of John Dillon, with its detailed account of the Plan of Campaign, probably the first in modern times.

Paul Bew's more recent C. S. Parnell 1980, is a short but useful summary of up to date assessments of the Irish Leader, which tend to become more and more critical, despite some misguided attempts to canonise him lately. The unrealistic obsession with Parnell, and the numerous myths that have prevailed about him in most general accounts of that period, is another primary cause for the neglect of the agrarian struggle, especially from 1886 to 1891, when it took second place inevitably to the Parnell controversy on Crime (1888-89) and Divorce (1890-91). The "Cult of Parnellism" was sedulously fostered by his brilliant lieutenants, especially T. M. Healy, T. P. O'Connor, Thomas Sexton and William O'Brien as T. W. Moody points out in Davitt's biography (P. 546), and "after preaching his autocracy for ten years, it was the same four who led the revolt against their uncrowned king in 1890".

Modern experts tend to be particularly critical of Parnell's alienation of his fellow Protestants in Ulster, which began as far back as 1878, when he failed to vote in support of Ulster land proposals at Westminster, and indulged in Fenian revolutionary rhetoric, that was both ambiguous and insincere. Later in 1881 by putting up a Home Rule candidate in Tyrone, against the advice of his own party, "he alarmed and angered the whole Presbyterian body and split Ulster once more into distinctly hostile camps of Catholic and Protestant", to quote from his close lieutenant J. J. O'Kelly from Devoy's Postbag (again only published in 1948).

After initial expressions of support for the Land League at huge demonstrations in both Mayo and Galway (Kiltulla), Parnell became President, and took over national control centralised in Dublin, "with typical opportunism". Within a year of its formation (1880), as Joseph Lee demonstrates in his incisive chapter on the Land War (Milestones in Irish History, 1986) "the Land League had already abandoned Mayo and Connacht, so that evictions actually increased in County Mayo during 1880 and 1881". The "No Rent Manifesto (1881)" caused widespread violence and agrarian outrages all over the country, as Parnell sought to please his Fenian supporters by extreme measures, while estranging Orange Ulstermen even further.

Later he abolished the Ladies Land League (1882) though set-up by Davitt, while his Kilmainham Treaty was a sell-out of both Davitt and Dillon, the two leading land reformers in Ireland then. Dillon resigned, though ostensibly on health grounds and emigrated without confronting Parnell, thus removing any serious threat to his leadership, which began to deteriorate from that time (see John Dillon). When Davitt presented Parnell with an updated and expanded version of the Land League (1882), the latter refused even to discuss the new proposals, and Davitt wrote in his diary on August 3rd: "There is very little backbone in the man after all".

Parnell's response was to set up The Irish National League (October 17th, 1882), which was designed to serve chiefly as an electoral machine for the parliamentary party, and marked the end of the Land League plan old and new, that Davitt later described as "the complete eclipse, by a purely parliamentary

substitute, of what had been a semi-revolutionary organisation . . . . the overthrow of a movement and the enthronement of a man" (T. W. Moody, P. 546). Nevertheless, being the loyal unambitious person he was, Davitt continued to co-operate with Parnell's new League, and though he recognised and detested the personality cult of his leader, like Dillon he wanted to avoid a split in the Party, though it would have been better had it occurred in 1882, rather than in 1891.

One of the major questions being posed today is, had Parnell been confronted earlier, and resigned even between 1886 and 1890, would a united Irish Parliamentary Party not have achieved Home Rule, at least in 1893 (Gladstone's last Home Rule Bill), if not long before? Many people still innocently believe that it was the Irish Bishops and the anti-divorce lobby (shades of the 1986 referendum!) that caused Parnell's downfall, which in itself illustrates clearly the abysmal ignorance about this whole saga, and explains why the real significant success of the Land War has been overlooked for so long.

Most general histories of the late 19th century, have also been quite inadequate in their treatment of The Plan of Campaign, until fairly recently, and hence I have only listed a few books under the (b) general heading in the bibliography that answer this requirement, while section (c) has a list of titles that deal specifically with the land question and agrarian agitation. Under unpublished material section (d) is Steads' famous Pall Mall Gazette, which shattered the complacent indifference of British public opinion towards the savage conditions under the Clanricarde regime, and other parts of the country, bringing Woodford and East Galway before the eyes of the world.

Included here too are two U.C.G. theses on the Woodford and South East Galway evictions by Tom Feeney and Anne Finnegan Ó Maille, respectively, which are due for publication later this year in a book to be edited by T. P. O'Neill, U.C.G. and also to include the series of Spring 1986 lectures organised by Woodford Heritage Group and given by various distinguished scholars, including Gearoid O Tuathaigh, Patrick Melvin, P. K. Egan and others.

Since this book is primarily intended as a centenary tribute to the evictions in Woodford and East Galway that led to the emergence of "The Plan of Campaign", it principally covers the events leading up to 1886, including Saunders Fort, and therefore does not go into great detail about the Plan itself, either locally or nationally. For that reason, it is now necessary to take a brief look at the effectiveness of the Plan generally, and its fundamental importance for the whole country.

How Important was The Plan of Campaign?

In 1870 only 3% of Irish householders owned the land of which 80% was owned by .01% of the population, with a mere 20 landlords owning nearly 20% of all Ireland. There were about 400 landlords controlling all the productive land in County Galway and five of these together owned 300,000 acres, namely Dunsandle, Clonbrock, Clancarthy, Berridge and Clanricarde. After the rather ineffective Land Act of 1870, only 877 tenants bought out their holdings, while the 1881 Land Act was unsuccessful too, despite the inclusion of The

Three Fs and a special Land Commission, though this was really a landlord scheme to control the land.

Both Acts did not provide enough capital to buy the land, and more than half the tenants were excluded by the various conditions of the 1881 Act, but it did accept the principle of dual ownership by both landlord and tenant, a basic recognition of what Bishop Duggan had achieved, in 1872 with "The Portcarron Award" (see P. K. Egan's Bishop Duggan). The 1885 Ashbourne Act made £5 million available for land purchase, and 25,000 tenants bought out their holdings as a result, though once more it was generally ineffective, and capital again ran out, but in 1888 another £5 million was provided for land purchase.

Meanwhile, the Plan of Campaign was launched in 1886, and the immediate result were three new Land Acts giving (1) greater security to tenants (1887) and (2 & 3) more favourable loans for land purchases (1888-1891). It was not until 1891 however, that the first real transfer of land from landlord to tenant occurred, when thirty million pounds was made available for land purchase. In the same year the Congested Districts Board was set up to help the poorer regions along the West Coast, and over the next few years it assisted another 59,910 people to acquire their own holdings. Thus within five years of The Plan of Campaign, landlordism was rapidly disintegrating and the plight of the neglected West of Ireland and other impoverished areas, was being helped by setting up new industries and improving land production.

In 1894, The Irish Co-operative Movement (Horace Plunkett), and later "The United Irish League" (William O'Brien) 1898, played vital roles in the development of Irish agriculture, and the necessity of purchasing more land, respectively, with all these forces combining together to produce eventually in 1903, Wyndham's Land Act, which was by far the most successful of all. £100 million was advanced for purchase loans, enabling over 250,000 people to acquire homesteads, and the 1909 amendment made compulsory purchase possible, following the 1907 Evicted Tenants Act, formulated by William Duffy M.P., Loughrea, which forced landlords to sell to evicted tenants in certain cases.

Thus a further 66,500 became landowners in 1909, with over 330,000 altogether completed by that year i.e. between 1903 and 1909. From 1870 to 1909, 1.3 million acres had been transferred to about 400,000 new owner farmers, certainly a wonderful achievement, that Davitt aptly entitled "The Fall of Feudalism in Ireland" (see Tierney's Modern Ireland). Another 10 million acres would change hands over the next ten years, and by 1916, 64% of the little homesteads of Ireland were owned by their occupants, as against 3% in 1870. Surely this was the greatest social revolution in Irish history for over 1,000 years, especially when you consider that Ireland had remained one of the last great bastions of feudalistic landlordism in Europe.

If O'Connell's Democratic movement had led to the achievement of Catholic emancipation by peaceful means in 1829 after the Penal Laws, then a similarly peaceful democratic Plan of Campaign had secured the land of Ireland for the people of Ireland, after the numerous plantations over previous centuries. Since Connacht had endured the worst plantation of all by Cromwell in the 1680's, it was only natural that the struggle to regain the land should originate

there, and that County Galway, which had more landlords than any county in Ireland per head of population, should emerge as the driving power of the campaign.

More than anything else it was "The Plan" that brought the terrible plight of the Irish tenants before the eyes of the world, and in particular to the notice of British workers, who saw it was a form of legitimate strike against capitalistic mine owners and landlords, with the important element of collective bargaining. It survived various attempts to destroy it by Church (Rome's Papal Rescript after British influence in 1888), and State (Balflour's coercive policies), and also by Parnell himself, though by 1886, he was leader in name only, and even then in parliamentary affairs rather than in land policy.

After the birth of his child by Kitty O'Shea in 1882, Parnell had lived a reclusive life in London, but after foisting Capt. O'Shea on a reluctant Galway constituency in February 1886, he travelled there to prevent a mutiny of his outraged party and insisted on his candidacy. This was the last straw for Dillon and the majority of the Irish M.P.'s, though again through loyalty to their leader, they maintained a facade of party unity at Westminster in order to achieve Home Rule from April to July 1886. Ironically it was Capt. O'Shea who caused the defeat of the Home Rule Bill, after misrepresenting Parnell's position to Chamberlain, who consequently voted against Gladstone's Bill, despite his declared support previously. At any rate, despite Parnell's opposition to the Plan of Campaign (or some would say because of it) only 20 estates resisted the tenants combination, whereas it worked successfully on almost 100 others, and above all proved to the landlords that they were not going to be let off the hook on this occasion.

Unfortunately, there has been no comprehensive study devoted to The Plan of Campaign as yet, which is another basic reason for its being overlooked, and its significance unappreciated through text book simplification. This will soon be remedied, however, with the forthcoming publication of Lawrence Geary's book in Autumn, which traces the course of the second phase of the Irish Land War (1886 to 1891), while examining its impact on Church, State and society (see bibliography). In addition, it should also complement this present centenary volume, which concentrates mainly on the story of events leading up to the launching of the Plan in East Galway in October, 1886. At this stage, having tried to demonstrate the fundamental importance and effectiveness of "The Plan of Campaign" generally, I would like to answer the question in this final paragraph namely —

Why Woodford and South-East Galway?

The defence of Saunders Fort, August 20th to 27th, 1886, by a courageous band of Woodford men, was the spark that lighted the fire of combined resistence to landlord evictions, not only on the Clanricarde estate in South East Galway but all over the country, as it soon became the rallying cry of all Irish tenants. Dublin Castle was disturbed by the national press coverage, which had now become world news, and after Parnell's Irish National League had refused support to John Roche in September, the Woodford Tenants Defence Association decided to go it alone, with the support of course of all East and South Galway, and tenants everywhere, who resolved "to emulate the

effective National spirit of the Woodford tenants" (United Ireland). John Dillon, William O'Brien and Matt Harris showed their support for the Woodford combination, and thus emerged The Plan of Campaign, the details of which you can read under "Chronology of Events".

Apart from the immediate chain of events that sparked off the Campaign in Woodford and South East Galway, there are many other reasons why it emerged "Neath Aughty's Stories and "Shannon's Wave", some of them already listed here, or elsewhere in the book. Bishop Duggan of Clonfert, was not only an inspiring influence himself on the tenants of his East Galway diocese, but supported and encouraged his diocesan Clergy to work actively for social justice for their parishioners, as most of them did.

He sent Fr. Egan from Loughrea to Woodford in 1885, knowing that Fr. Coen P.P. needed his patriotic enthusiasm there, and this clerical team were quite a formidable combination, leading the local tenants with courage and dynamic determination. Matt Harris elected M.P. in 1885, was a major cause of East Galway's leadership, due to the widespread organisation he had established there since 1876-77, so that when Davitt's Land League was being eclipsed by Parnell nationally, Matt's Land League branches were only beginning to thrive all over East Galway, which gradually became the power base instead of Mayo. Of course Clanricarde himself was another reason why the battle began and ended in East Galway, starting with his rent increases after the Nolan-Trench election in 1872, to his death in 1916, up to which time he opposed every effort by his tenants to acquire their land.

Thus for almost 45 years his tenants from Craughwell to Portumna suffered continually at his hands, so it is little wonder that their sufferings were not in vain, but proved the inspiration and backbone of a great national movement.

Finally, Woodford itself gets special place here, because the combination was centered there, and the history and heritage of its people form an essential backbrop to South East Galway itself, and The Plan of Campaign. May this centenary volume ensure that the heroism of a century ago will never be forgotten in the coming times.

—Cathal Stanley

Land Tenure in Ireland
A Little Background

by M. J. Shiel

Until the coming of the Normans in the 12th century the ancient Gaelic or Brehon system of land tenure obtained in Ireland. The base was the tribe (or clan) with a ruler elected by its freemen for the use of chiefs, officials, bards, lawyers and priests, and the remainder was allocated to members of the tribe and their dependants according to rank and need. Every member thus had a claim on these lands in his own way. By tradition there was no attempt on the part of a chieftain to claim absolute ownership of the land or bequeath it to his heirs. The emphasis was on the survival and well-being of the tribe as a whole. While the system was suitable for pastoral farming, it was not so for crop-raising which required enclosure. Productivity was consequently low by Norman standards and the country was a tempting target for conquest and more intensive agricultural exploitation.

The conquerors laid claim to vast areas of land and with their disciplined forces, heavy armour and mobility, had little difficulty in establishing a strong foothold. They built well-fortified strongholds throughout the country and while they were difficult to displace, their effect on everyday life for the average peasant was not too upsetting. They were all pre-Reformation Christians as were the Irish and so religion was not the strong dividing line it was to become in later centuries. In time, intermarriage absorbed many into the Gaelic community to become "more Irish than the Irish themselves". Others, disenchanted with the harsher climate, returned to the more benign climate of England leaving agents to manage their estates - thus becoming the first "absentee landlords".

The Norman Conquest was thus not an unbearable burden on the native Irish, many of whom through intermarriage had regained much of their land. In fact, outside the "Pale" - a small English-dominated enclave surrounding Dublin - the culture and customs remained essentially Irish.

Enter King Henry VIII at the beginning of the 16th century. Henry was worried (as indeed were to be many of his successors up to the present time) that an independant Gaelic Ireland could become a base for attack by his enemies. In order to strengthen the English grip on the country, he, and later his daughter Elizabeth I, introduced the system of "Surrender and Regrant" whereby the Gaelic and "Old English" (Norman) chieftains surrendered all their lands to him as King and were then regranted title to these lands by the authority of the King together with lordly titles e.g. Earl of Tyrone, Earl of Tyrconnell - provided they remained loyal. This arrangement also appealed to many of the chieftains. They now held their land as owners with the right of succession. The Feudal system had arrived. This was a major change from being merely elected administrators on behalf of the clan as under the Brehon system.

The English Reformation brought about a traumatic change in the relationship between the King and his Irish subjects. His efforts and those of his immediate successors to force Protestantism on the Norman (Old English) stock, not to speak of the native Irish, took on the character of a fresh conquest,

and were fiercely resisted. Even Catholic Mary Tudor played her part in the reconquest by evicting the Gaelic O'Moores of Laois and the O'Connors of Uí Failghe and replacing them with Anglo-Irish lords, renaming the territories Queen's County and King's County. Elizabeth I, however, far surpassed her step-sister by confiscating large areas of Munster and awarding them to her supporters.

The "Flight of the Earls", (O'Donnell and O'Neill) in 1607 opened up almost the whole of Ulster to plantation by James I. He adopted a new sytem. Instead of granting large tracts of land to favoured followers, who then perforce had to retain the native Irish as tenants in order to work the land and produce revenue, he brought in a complete plantation of landlords, tenant farmers, tradesmen, labourers and merchants and almost completely ousted the natives. A completely alien colony was thus set up in Ulster which expanded and which has persisted up to the present day - Presbyterians from Scotland and Anglicans from England, the descendants of whom still stoutly proclaim their Britishness. (See article on 'The Ultachs' by S. McEneary).

Cromwell, in the 1650's could be said to have completed the conquest. As he and his troops ravaged their way through the country even the aristocracy and gentry, if Catholic, merely got the opportunity of getting "to Hell or to Connacht".

Two distinct nations had now emerged in the small island of Ireland. On top were the landlords - perhaps not exceeding 10,000 in all - who under the authority of the Crown owned or laid claim to 90% of the land. Also in the same group came the sub-landlords who held sizeable tracts of land from the head landlords, sometimes directly and sometimes at second or even third-hand. Included in this class also, were the senior upholders of the law, senior officials in the government, the Army, the established clergy and much of the professional class. They were almost to a man Protestant, English or of English extraction. They were on the whole a well-educated and cultured class. As they were eventually regarded as Irish (of the "right sort") by the English, and as English by the native Irish, they rapidly became known as the Anglo-Irish. Paradoxically, most of the greatest leaders against English domination in Ireland in the 18th and 19th centuries came from this class, as indeed did some of Ireland's greatest poets and writers of recent centuries.

The second nation - far exceeding in numbers that of the first - were the descendants of the original pre-plantation population. They had been reduced to a nation of mostly uneducated labourers, cottiers, small tenant farmers to generate the rent revenue* *(*See Note 1 at end of article)*. and the domestic and outdoor staff required in great numbers to service the needs of their masters. One of the most powerful instruments in effecting this degradation of a once proud people had been the Penal Laws enacted in the years following the broken Treaty of Limerick of 1691. To quote from a letter written in 1742: "Their declared object was to reduce the Catholics of Ireland to a miserable populace, without property, without estimation, without education ... they divided the nation into two distinct bodies without common interest, sympathy or connection, one of which bodies was to possess **all** franchise, **all** the property, **all** the education. The others were to be drawers of water and cutters of turf for them".

To make matters worse, as the acreage left to the Catholic peasantry and gentry diminished, the population commenced to soar. A number of factors contributed to this situation:

(i) The potato, which had been introduced to Ireland towards the end of the 16th century, proved a nutritious food and a prolific crop, easy to grow. A man could feed a large family for year on a very small patch of ground, his only implement being a spade.

(ii) Subdivision of the already small tenant plots was encouraged by the landlords as it produced higher rents from the same acreage.

(iii) As always when people are eking out a bare living at subsistence level, they married young and produced large families, which were indeed the norm of the time. From the acre or so on which he had built his simple cabin, the husband could feed his family on potatoes from a quarter of the acre, and pay his rent with crops from the rest.

The result, particularly in the period leading up to the Napoleonic Wars, was an explosion in the Irish peasant population. From about three million at the beginning of the 18th century, it exceede four million at the end, and in the 1840's, prior to the Great Famine, it was over eight million. Even without the catastrophe of the Famine the position was desperate. With the defeat of Napoleon, agricultural produce of high quality and low price recommenced being imported to England from Continental sources, destroying the market for the Irish product. The most abject poverty stalked rural Ireland - especially in the west. The Famine cost the lives of one million and intensified the haemorrhage of emigration which, together with later marriages and consequently smaller families had reduced the population by 50% at the end of the century. In many parts of Ireland this came as a relief. The smaller number remaining on the land were able to eke out a somewhat better existence than heretofore - except in the West of Ireland where congestion, poor land and a precarious climate continued to combine against any improvement in the lot of the small tenant farmer. However, prices for agricultural produce gradually improved and a very welcome addition to the income of the family whose children had gone abroad started to arrive in the form of emigrants' remittances. For the century following the Great Famine, for tens of thousands of rural families, the "American cheque" sent back by the son or daughter who had "got on" in the U.S.A. or Canada meant all the difference between bare subsistence and at least meagre comfort for the parents.

Nevertheless, despite a number of measures introduced by the English Parliament to mitigate conditions, the small tenant-farmer remained very much the underdog. This obtained particularly in the north-west and south-west. In the comparatively good years of, say, 1850 to 1870, finding the rent-money was difficult enough; in the poor years which followed, it proved almost impossible. Landlord-tenant relationships, never cordial, (as, unlike in England, the landlord represented the invader and the oppressor), grew worse and worse. Agrarian unrest grew and a number of organisations, some constitutional, some verging on the illegal, and indeed some frankly illegal, arose to protect the tenants' interests. These in turn became more and more identified with the demand for a greater degree of political independence from the English governments which with a few exceptions always sided with the English landlords.

The jackboot of coercion laws was frequently applied when the tenant agitation appeared to be getting out of hand. This of course made the discontent worse. Despite the best efforts of some notable Members of Parliament to effect reform, the bald fact remained that a very small numbewr of English landlords, or lanlords of English extraction, continued to control the destinies of millions of impoverished Irish tenants, sometimes literally to the point of life and death. A major revolt was imminent.

By the 1880's, when the story of the Woodford Evictions and the Plan of Campaign begins, a series of disastrous farming years had brought the tenants, particularly in the west of Ireland, to the point of open revolt.

For a few glorious years the tenants of the Marquis of Clanricarde brought Woodford and the surrounding area into world headlines, as they fought with the pathetic weapons at their command, to defend their homes from demolition or occupation by the agents of one of the most notorious absentee landords of the whole period; who, oblivious of or uncaring for their plight, continued to demand what he considered his due, down to the last penny.

While in the short term the fight appeared to be of very limited success, the publicity surrounding it and the determination shown to the world by the frustrated tenants helped in a major way to bring about the legislation which finally broke the landlords' power. Clanricarde resisted bitterly to the very end but even he eventually, after fighting the case through every court at the disposal of such a rich and powerful man, had to succumb. In 1915 his Galway estates were compulsorily acquired for the tenants. The land war of S.E. Galway was over at last.

Note 1. It should be stressed that the landlord-tenant relationship in Ireland, apart from planted Ulster, was completely different from the English situation. There, the landlord was usually resident, took an interest in his tenants' welfare, provided housing and out offices, effected improvements and generally helped the tenants to develop a high standard of farming and living in what were usually much larger farms on much better (and better looked-after) land.

In Ireland, the landlord was alien - frequently absentee - and regarded himself as an intrinsic part of the English garrison, (see following note). With a few notable and enlightened exceptions, he had little interest in his tenants' welfare. His responsibility ended with the renting of parcels of land (acquired originally by conquest) to his tenants, and the collection of the resulting rents which all too often were spent in high living in more attractive surroundings such as London's clubland. The tenants had very insecure tenure. Any improvements - and with their subsistence-level living standard they could afford very little - almost invariably led to raising of the rent, as the value of the 'farm' was now considered to be higher, a situation to which the landlord had not contribued one penny. It is little cause for wonder that the appearance of so many Irish tenant farms and housing was so miserable - due to fear of higher rents if any signs of prosperity became evident. *M.J.S.*

Clanricardes and Burkes

"And later times saw deeds as brave
and glory guards Clanricarde's grave"
"Sing, O, they died their lands to save
At Aughrim's Slopes and Shannon's wave"
(The West Asleep - Thomas Davis)

When Thomas Davis wrote above that "glory guards Clanricard's grave", he was not to know that, forty years later, the last of the Clanricarde line was destined to hand down to Irish history a name and a fame anything but glorious. Nevertheless for seven hundred years, the leading family of the de Burgos played a prominent and at times a decisive role in Irish affairs.

The Burkes were Norman, and with all due respect to Butlers and Fitzgeralds, Barrys and Roches, the Burkes in sheer numbers and in close involvement in the Gaelic scene, were a race apart among the Normans.

The first De Burgo to come to Ireland, William, arrived with King John in 1185; he was brother of the powerful Hubert de Burgo, later Justiciar of England. Before his death in 1205, William had acquired lands in Munster and married the daughter of O'Brien of Thomond. He apparently got a grant of whatever lands he could conquer in Connacht, but confined himself to establishing strongpoints at Meelick and Portumna. While he was known to later Irish historians as "William the Conqueror", the title, so far as Connacht is concerned, properly belongs to his son, Richard.

Richard got a renewed grant of lands in Connacht in 1226. Between then and his death in 1241, he carried out with Norman and Gaelic allies, a ruthless war of colonisation, which left him the most powerful man in the province with headquarters at Loughrea. The De Burgos later made Portumna their chief residence.

From 1265, the De Burgos held also the title of Earl of Ulster, until in 1333 the third or Brown Earl, was murdered leaving an only daughter as his heiress. Under feudal laws of inheritance, where property passed only through the male line, this meant that legally, through subsequent marriages, the De Burgo lands and titles in Connacht and Ulster ultimately fell to the English royal family.

This prospect was unacceptable to the De Burgos. The junior members of the family, Ulick and Éamonn Albanach, sons of William Liath De Burgo, rejected feudal claims, and set themselves up as chieftains on the Gaelie model, Ulick under the title of Mac Uilliam Íochtair (Lower), with lands in Co. Galway, the ancestor of the Earls of Clanricarde, and Éamonn Albanach under the title of Mac Uilliam Uachtair (Upper), with lands in Co. Mayo, the ancestor of the Burkes of Mayo. In Irish terminology, long before maps, upper meant south and lower, north: witness Upper Ballinakill, meaning Woodford.

This move ensured the continued dominance of the De Burgos in Connacht for over 200 years, in an era when Norman or English power elsewhere in Ireland was struggling to survive. It had however its disadvantages, since the Irish style of chieftainship involved recurring internal contests for the succession to the title.

The next major turning point occured in 1543, when the Mac Uilliam Uachtair of the day, Úilic na gCeann, submitted to the new political regime of Henry VIII, accepting with it the title of Earl of Clanricarde (Henry having jibbed at bestowing the title of Earl of Connacht). While this move preserved the De Burgo estates for another 150 years (in spite of the family's obstinate adherence to the Catholic faith), it meant that the Earls remained the faithful supporters of the English Crown, presenting a formidable obstacle to any joint effort of the resurgent Irish.

But though submission was intended to eliminate disputes about the succession, in fact the next 60 years, up to the battle of Kinsale, were full of internal family quarrels; partly due to the complicated matrimonial entanglements of the Earls, some of the junior branches of the family were constantly at odds with the reigning Earl, and hence in arms against the English Government.

The fourth Earl bears the title, Riocard Chinn tSáile, where his cavalry charge played a major part in turning this crucial battle against the army of O'Neill and O'Donnell. Richard raised the family to great heights of personal and political power. He was President of Connacht and Governor of Galway, and was given the additional new English title of Earl of St. Albans, while his wife was the widow of the Earl of Essex and daughter of the former English Secretary of State. He also built Portumna Castle, and yet his closing days were clouded with Lord Deputy Wentworth's threat to revive the old Crown claim against the Burke estates, and to submit Connacht to survey, confiscation and plantation.

His son, Ulick, the fifth Earl, though one of the leading Catholic noblemen, held aloof from the Confederation of Kilkenny, and prevented a full-scale adhesion by Connacht to the Confederate armies. He did, however, take part in the final resistance against Cromwell, who confiscated his estates.

The estates were restored after the return of Charles II to the throne. However, thirty years later, they were forfeited once more, after Richard Burke had been killed fighting for King James at the battle of Aughrim 1691 (according to some accounts, treacherously, after quarter had been given) and his brother, John, had been taken prisoner. A fortnight later, their brother Richard, the 8th Earl, surrendered Galway to Ginkel, not without whispers accusing him of treachery. By now, the Clanricarde attachment to the Catholic religion was coming under strain. Already, about 1681, Richard, the future 8th Earl, was reported to have conformed to the established religion. In 1699 John Burke followed suit, and having sent his two eldest sons to be brought up as Protestants, and having agreed to pay a fine of £25,000, his estates were by legislation returned to him in 1704, together with the title of 9th Earl.

The Clanricardes continued through the 18th and 19th centuries, no longer wielding political power on the national scene, but still a potent force west of the Shannon. The last Clanricardes but one, having witnessed the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland in 1869, resigned his seat in Parliament in 1871 in protest against the 1870 Land Act, which though mild and ineffective, he yet regarded as an intolerable breach of the rights of property. His last years were further embittered by the revolt of his tenants in the Nolan-Trench election of 1872.

Thus the De Burgo estates of the west, first established by feudal might in the

13th century, retained by defiance of feudal law in the 14th, retained by submission to the new Tudor political power in the 16th, and once again retrieved by conformity to the established religion at the start of the 18th, approached the stage of final dissolution.

Tomás Ó Gormain

Lord Clanricarde

by Desmond Roche

The Plan of Campaign had a number of victories in its county of origin, East Galway, but the campaigners also encounterd there the Plan's most formidable enemy, The Marquess of Clanricarde. Landlord and tenant there grappled in deadly combat, each seeking the hold or opening which would bring the other to his knees. The tenants suffered much, enduring loss and hardship. Clanricarde lost much, but escaped the hardship. The struggle lasted some thirty years and ended only with Clanricarde's being forcibly parted from his Galway estates.

An American historian[1] described the Marquess:

> 'He was a millionaire, a miser, a recluse and a connoisseur of **objets d'art:** and no man did more to injure the Unionist cause in Ireland. His eccentric habits, which were almost fictional in their variety, made him the ideal target for the Plan's promoters. Objecting to interference of any kind in the management of his estates - which according to popular accounts, he had never seen - Clanricarde had earned notoriety by informing his tenants: "If you think you can intimidate me by shooting my agent, you are mistaken".

Hubert George de Burgh Canning later Lord Clanricarde was born in 1832, second son of the first Marquess, and Harriet, only daughter of George Canning the Prime Minister. After some unhappy years at Harrow, he entered the diplomatic service in 1852 and was attached to the Legation at Turin. While there he was miserably poor. Foreign Office attaches at the time were expected to live on their private means and Claricarde's[2] allowance from his father was so small that it is said that to save expense, he arranged with the office caretaker to sleep in a broom cupboard. He is also said to have been 'more or less his own tailor', a practice which he never discarded. Indeed he exercised D.I.Y. talent to such a degree with age, that he became one of the oddest sights of London.

The stark economy forced on Clanricarde as a young diplomat was, as he well knew, a consequence of his father's sprendthrift habits, coupled with his indulgence towards his elder son, Lord Dunkellin. Dunkellin was the favourite son, popular and handsome, well-known and liked in Ireland. The two brothers saw little of each other and disliked what they saw. It is possible that Clanricarde's resentment at being thrust into the background and humiliated before his diplomatic colleagues, was transformed into a dislike, even hatred, of the people and country which his father and brother found so congenial.

When the impoverished attache had spent ten years in Turin, he suddenly and unexpectedly became a rich man. He had in the meantime risen to be a Second Secretary, and had undergone various vicissitudes, some of them unusual

Lord Clanricarde.

in diplomatic life. During the Austrian War, for instance, he was arrested as a spy by the French, who found difficulty in believing that the gaunt badly-dressed figure was a young English aristocrat attached to the Foreign Office.[3]

The stroke of fortune which converted the released 'spy' into a wealthy Londoner was the death, in 1862, of his uncle, Charles Lord Canning, a former Governor-General of India. It would take too long to explain why Canning chose the obscure Hubert as his heir (he had no offspring of his own) in preference to the dashing Lord Dunkellin, but the startling fact was that at the age of thirty, Hubert inherited a fortune of over £250,000, and assumed the additional name of Canning.[4] It was a case, not exactly of rags to riches, but of pauper rags to affluent rags.

The money apparently came too late for Clanricarde to change most aspects of his lifestyle, but he resigned from the Foreign Service and became a bachelor man about town in London. He also emerged from the broom cupboard and took a set of rooms at the Albany in Piccadilly. The colourful story that he slept on a bench in Hyde Park, at twopence a night, is an entertaining piece of folklore - a case of 'painting the lily'.

Lord Dunkellin, the envied elder son died in 1867 of Bright's Disease and high living. He had been M.P. for Galway County, and Hubert was asked by his father to fill the vacancy, which he did for the next four years. It did not seem to be necessary for the candidate to visit his constituency: the old Marquess' word was enough. Hubert resigned the seat in 1871 in protest, it is said, against the Land Act 1870, but in one of the few speeches he made as a Parliamentarian, he spoke calmly enough about the Bill. It was, he said, though good in parts, 'fraught with injustice to the landlord'. But he was not actuated by a carping spirit of hostility:- 'No man can desire more sincerely than I do, the immediate settlement, as far as feasible, of this question, nor will I attempt the defence of the landed interest'. With a few minor amendments, the material interests of the good landlord would be fairly preserved. As for the bad landlord he would say: 'Serve him right'. But this meant, one supposes, that he had not yet become a landlord himself. He did not attain the status until 1874 when his father died and was buried in Portumna. The new Marquess made a rare, if not unique, visit to Ireland for the funeral, and returned immediately to London.

His life thenceforth followed the strange pattern which created the myth. Its most conspicuous feature was 'the dilapidated condition of his apparel' with 'his coat and even his hat ... often held together by rough stitching'.[5] His cravat 'was usually secured round his neck by a piece of old tape' in which however he wore 'a family jewel of great value ... A favourite scarf-pin of his was a large diamond; at the back of this he was fond of inserting a piece of coloured paper ... painted by himself with the aid of a child's colour-box'. Another less sympathetic account refers to 'his rusty frock-coat, the frayed ends of his baggy trousers, his unwashed appearance' and his fifty-years old overcoat. 'I do not say he made his own clothes, but they could not possibly have been more unshapely had he been his own tailor'.[6]

Contrary to popular belief (in Ireland at any rate) he was not a recluse in the real sense, and spent much of his abundant time wandering about London - a walking scarecrow without crows. 'He never, no matter how bad the weather, took a cab - he never lost and never forgot an umbrella'.[7]

A cartoon of the Marquess by Spy of **Vanity Fair** shows the mad-hatter figure carrying a large bag in one hand and a pair of boots equipped with ice-skates dangling from the other claw-like hand. Improbable as it seems, he became, at the age of seventy, a devotee of ice-skating, when the vogue of ice-rinks invaded London in the early 1900's. He frequented the rinks carrying skates, a bag of buns, an umbrella and an extra pair of skating boots.

He ate sparingly when at home, his greatest extravagance being a couple of boiled eggs. He had a standard egg, an old hard-boiled specimen, to guide his servants as to size. When in one of his clubs, he usually ate from a paper bag brought from the Albany. Though he occasionally ordered a meal, he was never known to entertain anyone to dinner and, of course, never received an invitation. Ralph Nevill once asked him to have a drink, and got the following rocket: 'I don't want a drink, and if I want a drink I can pay for it. Allow me to say that I am surprised at your indulging in such a low, vulgar, habit'; (clearly a sterling opponent of the 'round' system![7])

One could go on at tedious length about Clanricarde's innumerable idiosyncrasies - his constant efforts to cadge free benefits from his clubs - The Travellers' and St. James; his expertise as a collector of Sevres china, paintings and jewellery, his complaints about careless dressing - in others; his pipe smoking, his habit of smoking cigars by instalments, his parsimonious affairs with various women, one of which is mentioned in the article on Blunt, and so forth. But enough is enough. It is worth adding perhaps, the story then current in London,

that he financed Sanguinetti, the moneylender - a story never proved or disproved.[8] And his pride in his connection with Canning. 'He lived surrounded by Canning and not Clanricarde things'.[9] His dislike of Ireland and the Irish was a contributory cause of his cruel conduct towards his tenants.

Michael McDonagh has given in his **Studies** article on the Marquess' only speech in the House of Lords[10], a marvellous picture of Clanricarde's appearance and behaviour in old age. The occasion was Birrel's Evicted Tenants Bill of 1907, when Clanricarde was 75. His denunciation of the Bill was received in chilling silence. His unpopularity would have discouraged a less inhuman speaker, but he seemed totally indifferent to the feelings of others. Indeed, the startling thing noted by McDonagh in the speech was the entire absence of any note of self-defence. That was unnecessary. Clanricarde was always convinced of his own rectitude. His case was above argument as he himself, the great aristocrat, was above criticism, if not above the law.[11] It was one of the extraordinary paradoxes of the Clanricarde character that this unloved, solitary smelly, absurd figure, dressed in second-hand clothes bought in some flea-market, had the enormous self-confidence to defy the government, his own peers, the Irish nation and his tenants, and assert what he considered to be his rights through three decades of stubborn resistance.

McDonagh follows the scene in the House of Lords with a visit to the Albany Chambers, where we get a rate glimpse of the style, or lack of it, in which Clanricarde lived:

> 'I once called at his flat in the Albany - C.5 on the second floor - to make a newspaper inquiry at a time when he was reported to be very ill. A tall footman opened the door and invited me into the hall. It was a large square apartment with doors giving access to the living-rooms. On the wain-scotted walls were many shelves loaded with china ware, regardless of tasteful arrangement. In a corner stood an untidy pile of oil-paintings. It was like being in the shop of a second-hand dealer in curios.'

At some point after this, Clanricarde, the Great Evictor was himself evicted from his Albany rooms. 'One of Labouchere's favourite stories was that Lord Clanricarde sent a complaint to his landlord of the bad condition of his rooms and gave it to be understood, however, that what he wanted was not the removal of the insanitary conditions, but a reduction of his rent.[12] He had in spirit joined the Plan of Campaign! He moved to less impressive rooms in Hanover Square, where he was forced to keep his Sevres in the kitchen.[13] His china cabinet had been made by himself, knocked up from old packing cases.

In the meantime the shadows were beginning to darken about his shadowy existence. He had successfully resisted every effort made by Parliament to remedy the outstanding grievances of his Irish tenants, including the Evicted Tenants Act of 1907. He pursued his own tenants thorugh every court with maniacal vigour and resource. Finally the Government, by Act of 1909, endowed the Congested Districts Board with powers of compulsory land acquisition, and this engine was called into play against the Marquess. In a last desperate battle he fought the Board from the Irish Rolls Court to the Court of Appeal and the House of Lords which handed the case back to the Irish Land Court. There, on 29 July 1915, the historic conflict ended with a judgement in favour of the Board. The purchase price fixed by Judge Wylie was £238,211,

including arrears. It was equivalent to fourteen years' purchase of the entire estate.

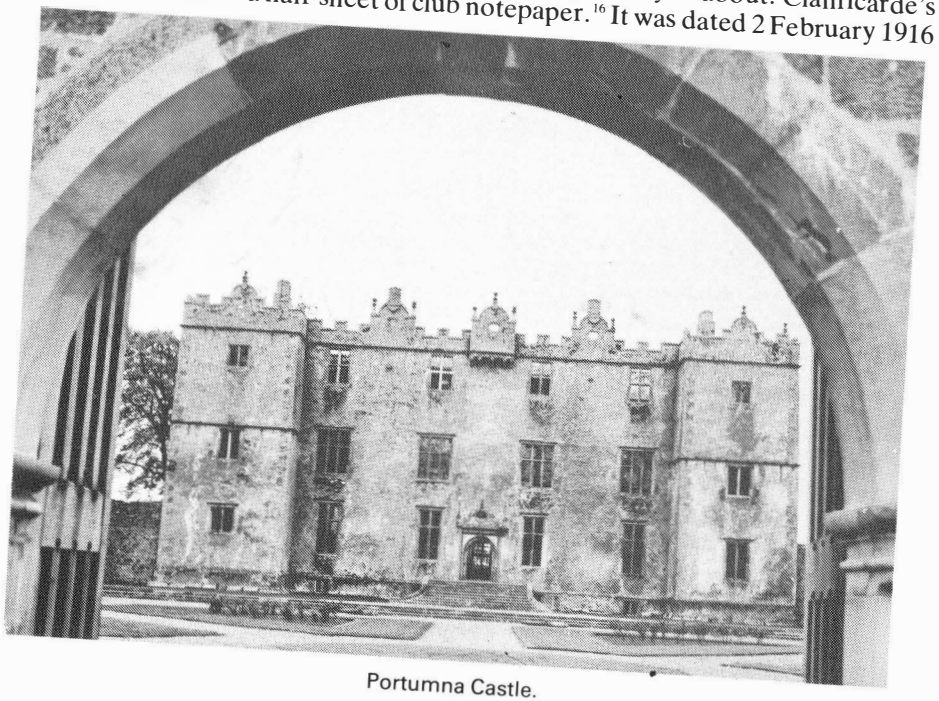
Clanricarde did not survive the defeat for long. He died in April of the followng year leaving property valued at £2,500,000, an immense fortune for the time.

"Old Wares" — Clanricarde, as seen by 'Spy'.

It would be a mistake however to infer that most of the cash was extracted from the impoverished tenantry of East Galway. His first inheritance of £250,000 was as long ago as 1862, when he had already developed the frugal habits and parsimonious management of money which intensified with the years. The Cannig property, under his careful stewardship, grew steadily between 1862 and his death 'and almost certainly represented a larger proportion of his final £2½M'.[14] Apart from a few minor bequests, the entire property went to Henry Lascelles, later Lord Harewood, who married Princess Mary, daughter of George V. There are many stories of how this inheritance came about, but the real circumstances were recounted by the present Lord Harewood in his memoirs:[15]

> My father inherited a fortune from an eccentric great-uncle, Lord Clanricarde, whose sister married my great-grandfather and whose mother was the daughter of George Canning, the Prime Minister. My father was wounded several times in the 1914 - 18 War and once, on leave, he was going to lunch in the St. James' Club when he recognised his great-uncle sitting in a corner. Lord Clanricarde was not at all popular in London, any more than in Ireland, where he had property; in fact he seems to have been a very disagreeable old man. In any case my father, out of manners, went to sit with his great-uncle for half an hour before lunch. In 1916, Lord Clanricarde died, leaving all his money to my father, to the great fury of my grandfather'.

Harewood does not say what the old man was annoyed about. Clanricarde's Will was made on a half-sheet of club notepaper.[16] It was dated 2 February 1916



Portumna Castle.

and left an annuity of £1,000 to Miss Burgo Weyland, daughter of his sister Lady Catherine Weyland; and a sum of £20,000 to his nephew Mark Weyland. All the rest went to Lascelles. The Will was witnessed by his butler and housekeeper.[17] Apart from the sister who married Lord Harewood, others married the Earl of Cork and Lord Allendale. Neither featured in the will unless the Lady Catherine mentioned was the connection with Lord Allendale.

The last of the Clanricardes was buried in London, a pitiful if not a shameful end to one of the greatest of Irish Norman families. There is no fitting epitaph, unless one takes Birrel's phrase about the Clanricarde estates, 'haunted by the ghosts of murdered men. Perhaps one should end with Lord Harewood's closing paragraph to his account of the half-mad Marquess:

> 'I went in the fifties to a performance of **Don Giovanni** in which singers from Covent Garden were appearing ... and I sat in a box with the President of Ireland [Seán T. O'Kelly]. He told me he was happy to have me as his guest so long as I did not tell anyone I was related to Lord Clanricarde, because that was bad news in Ireland'.

NOTES

1. L.P. Curtis, **Coercion and Conciliation** 1963. p.255.
2. He did not of course become Lord Clanricarde until 1874, twenty years later, but the anachronism is perpetrated for the sake of simplicity and, we hope, clarity.
3. Duc de Stacpoole, **Irish and Other Memories,** 1922, p.2.
4. Michael Maclagan, **Clemency Canning,** 1962, p.309. Note: Canning's Will made provision for his fortune to pass to a younger son of Lord Harewood if Lord Hubert succeeded his brother in the Clanricarde estates. Clanricarde followed this intention in making his own will in 1916.
5. Ralph Nevill, **The Life and Letters of Lady Dorothy Nevill,** 1919, p.186.
6. Michael McDonagh, The Marquess of Clanricarde, Studies June 1916.
7. Nevill, p.186.
8. T.P. O'Connor, **Memoirs of an Old Parliamentarian,** 1919 p.124.
9. Nevill, p.188.
10. Michael McDonagh, p.264. Clanricarde had in fact made occasional speeches in the Lords, see e.g. Hansard April 1894.
11. Tom Page records a tradition that Clanricarde swore to his father on his deathbed that he would avenge the wrongs done by tenants who voted in the 1872 Election. This was to excuse his scandalous treatment of his tenants. I have failed to trace any other evidence of this episode, but as the note goes on to say, it is of very doubtful authenticity. In any event, the idea that Clanricarde needed to excuse his conduct is to misread his character.
12. T.P. O'Connor, p.123.
13. Nevill, p.190.
14. Michael Maclagan, private letter 5 November 1985.
15. Lord Harewood, **The Tongs and the Bones** 1981, p.p. 25-26.
16. Maclagan.
17. 'The Times', 6 May 1916. Both had been with Clanricarde for long periods.

I bPort Omna Dom

Séamus Ó hAodha

Cága i nid an Ghaill
Drisleach is eidhean tuibh;
Clann Riocairt bhí tréan,
Cá bhfuil a réim indiubh?

Caisleáin 'na gcarn cloch,
Bocht indiubh a mbua;
Daingean sa má méith
Sliocht Gaeil ó'n riasc rua.

Mar réalt ar theacht lae,
Mar sneachta ar thaobh abhann,
Mar choinnle i ndáil gaoith'
Síol Riocairt bhí teann.

The poet, Séamus Ó hAodha was born in Cork city in 1886; he died in 1967. In addition to poetry he wrote a number of plays. The present poem was inspired by reflecting on the ruined castles in Portumna - the ivy and briar-clad ruins inhabited by the crows, the fruitless victory of the Clanrickarde family, whereas secure in the fertile plains (daingean sa má méith) the Gaels ("the old inhabitants of the island" as Professor George O'Brien used say) have come in from the bogs.

Contributed by Michael Flannery.

Portumna — A Military Expedition

by M.J. Shiel

Friday 27 August 1886 dawned benignly over the capital of the British Empire. The weather forecast was 'Fair generally but cloudy'. The 'Season' had now come to an end, with the departure for Balmoral, Scotland, of Her Majesty.

The average reader of the London early morning newspapers could be well satisfied with his life. The Empire of Queen Victoria was at its zenith. The 'Pax Britannica' held sway over an Empire on which the sun never set. The Zulu Wars had been successfully concluded. In the Transvaal, the Boer Republic had been set up but under British suzerainty, with little inkling of the bloody struggle yet to come at the century's end.

There was this unrest in Ireland, particularly in the case of the multitude of smaller tenants who were refusing to pay their just rents. However, an adequate garrison and a well-trained and armed police would keep things from boiling over. As far as the average Londoner was concerned; (in the immortal words of Robert Browning) God (no doubt a White Anglo-Saxon Protestant) was in His Heaven and all was right with the world!

Portumna in the early 1920's.

Three hundred and fifty miles to the west, across the Irish Sea, on the shores of the River Shannon in the centre of Ireland, dawn broke somewhat later. It had been a busy night in the town of Portumna and the inhabitants had not had much sleep. A small army was being assembled for a major military-cum-civil operation. Five hundred members of the Royal Irish Constabulary had been drafted into the town armed with rifles and sword-bayonets. They had been reinforced by two companies of Her Majesty's Somerset Light Infantry. In addition were several score of civilian 'Emergency Men' armed with revolvers and a large fleet of jaunting cars, brakes and carts complete with horses, jarveys and drivers. These latter had all been brought from Dublin by train to the railhead at Birr, some fifteen miles away across the Shannon river. No assistance could be obtained locally. The 'Times' of that day (27 August 1886), reported: A manifest was issued last night by the Birr National League, forbidding tradesmen to supply provisions or modes of conveyance to the military and police attending the Woodford evictions. Great excitement prevails in the locality'. Many of the Dublin jarveys had been responsible for the sleepless nights of the Portumna burghers, as they celebrated the newly-won and very remunerative extension of their city business.

About 5 o'clock in the morning, the bugle call was heard and shortly afterwards came the military tramp of feet, as the two hundred men of the Somerset Light Infantry started on their march, six deep, on the road to Woodford. As they disappeared westwards, another and more mixed formation commenced to assemble on the same road - car after car of armed police, car after car of military and civilian supporters; mounted officers dashing hither and thither. At the end of the procession came the carts, loaded with baulks, planks, pickaxes, crowbars and sledgehammers. One cart contained a crude-looking equivalent of a mediaeval siege machine.

At about 7 o'clock the order was given, and the procession comprising about one hundred vehicles and stretching over a mile along the road commenced to

move, to the accompaniment of church bells ringing and horns blowing from adjoining hillsides to warm the 'enemy' of its advance.

The importance of the cortege was highlighted by the presence of two Resident Magistrates, two County Inspectors of the Royal Irish Constabulary and eight District Inspectors.

The objective of this mighty force was not, as a casual onlooker might have concluded, to sack a heavily fortified and well-defended city (a London evening newspaper later pointed out that in 1532 the Spaniard, Pizarro had conquered Peru with a much smaller army). The presence in the force of agent Joyce would have afforded some clue. The object of the exercise was to evict from their dwelling house the family of Thomas Saunders. His crime was his refusal to pay to The Marquis of Clanricarde, Albany, London, the previous year's rent of £14 on his holding, which, with the extra six months due in May of the current year added on, amounted to £21 in all.

This was the third attempt to remove Saunders. On the previous Friday and Saturday an almost equally large force had failed to storm the neat slated house at Drummin, two miles from the village of Woodford, and perforce had had to withdraw to Portumna to regroup and replan the operation.

This time there would be no mistakes. The planning had been well done. 'Saunders' Fort' (as it now had become known internationally) would be taken. Thomas Saunders and his colleagues (or fellow-conspirators) in the National League would be taught the lesson that the power of the landlords in Ireland - even such notorious and unpopular absentees as the Marquis of Clanricarde (or 'Clanrackrent', as he was known to his tenants) - could not be challenged with impunity. The forces of the Crown would be used to the limit required to ensure that the lesson was driven home to all concerned, that resistance to the law would not go unpunished.

The Siege of "Saunder's Fort"

THAT same evening, Friday, 20th August, the house of Thomas Saunders was attacked, the sheriff obviously thinking that it could be captured before the legal eviction time had elapsed. But it was here that the fiercest and most renowned resistance during the whole Land War occurred, earning the sobriquet of Saunder's Fort, thus adding a new word to the English Language.

Apart from the by now familiar means of defence used, a novel tactic was introduced by the defenders in the form of hives of bees, which were flung down on the assailants where they were most threatened. After the attack had proceeded for some hours without success, a triumphant cheer split the air, when the assailants retired for the night with the garrison still intact. This was the first house where the attackers had to leave without conquering. The discomfited party returned the obstacle-laden trail back to Portumna. That night the garrison was strengthened greatly. Any breaches were repaired, and stores of fuel and other necessary materials were installed in the house. In the morning a sub-sheriff returned with his army, heralded as usual by the cries of the people. But Saunders Fort was impregnable.

"All day long beneath the green flag the garrison ladled water out upon the besiegers splashing the lime-water over their clothes and into their eyes and shrieking with contemptuous laughter, as party after party retired discomfited. All day long it went on, and at last the sub-sheriff gave it up, and returned to Portumna in disgust". There can be little wonder that excitement reached fever pitch in Woodford, at the second failure of the sheriff and his party, and added greatly to the determination of the defenders not to surrender. So large an eviction party had only succeeded in carrying out three evictions in four days. During the night the house was greatly strengthened, and the Irish Times reported that:

"no work was done on the locality for three days".

Meanwhile the authorities realised that a much larger force and extra materials were needed to capture the Fort. The number of police had been much reduced by protecting the emergency men in the house already evicted, and also in the very necessary duty of patrolling the road between Portumna and Woodford, and many more were detailed to escort the prisoners to Galway. The sheriff further realised that only by the aid of a battering ram, a testudo, and scaling ladders, could the Fort be conquered. Therefore the next assault on Saunder's house was postponed pro tem. The police and soldiers were extensively boycotted as they waited for action, not only in Woodford, but in Portumna and Birr as well.

Whatever about boycotting, the police were obviously well entertained as they waited. The Irish Times reported that porter was being supplied to them from Ballinasloe "at a rate of 30 half barrels a day".

On Friday, August 27th, the evicting party, which could only be described as a small army — 700 police, two companies of Sommersetshire Light Infantry, and 40 emergency men, under Captain Hamilton — set out from Portumna at six o'clock. A delay was caused when the party found a bridge broken down, but having brought planks on this occasion, the difficulty was overcome.

At the house 'the crowbar brigade' set to work under cover of the testudo. The men inside, aware of the play, rolled huge boulders down on it from the roof. Lime water and bees were freely used as well. Three ineffective efforts were made to gain entrance "and the authorities seeing that there was no other course left open, the police climbed the ladders with swords drawn".

The twenty two men found inside were arrested and charged and remanded to Galway jail. The Irish Times recorded that:

"the greatest excitement prevailed, and were it not for the exertions of Fr. Coen, P.P., and Fr. Egan, there would likely have been a collision between the police and people".

The fact that no serious injury was caused, was one of the most amazing aspects of the evictions, although on one occasion at least serious injury was averted; when one policeman was being dragged towards a cauldron of boiling water, his companion drew a pistol and threatened to use it, for which he later underwent trial.

The Lewis Estate was the next scene for the attack of the Crowbar Brigade. Here the resistance was by no means as determined although the existance of more subtle tactics is discernible. At Spain's, the first house visited, the owner

was already in jail for defending 'Saunder's Fort'. But his wife, the United Ireland newspaper reported:
"had been so excited by the approach of the time for her being turned out of the miserable house, that she had given premature birth to a child a few hours before".

Reddington, the sheriff, refused to carry out the evictions at the doctor's warning. No less dramatic was the scene at the house of Thomas Coen, also of Druminamucla. "The wife of the tenant, four years an invalid, at the sight of the eviction party, swooned and fell insensible to the ground amid the piercing shrieks of her daughters". But the eviction proceeded regardless, and Fr. Coen administered the last rites of the Church:

"amid the sound of breaking furniture".

At the house of the Widow Coen a stiff resistance was expected, owing to the elaborate barricades. The first attempt at entry were greeted by a bath of scalding lime-water, which forced the attackers to retire wiping their eyes. After some more attempts at entry, when the efforts of the emergency men looked like succeeding
"from the windows of the house AND faces of four laughing girls — the sole occupants — protruded, inviting the emergency men to enter".

Similar scenes attended the evictions of Egan, Kelly and Carty, the tenants in each case, unlike the Clanricarde tenants, being admitted as caretakers.

The Sunday after the evictions, a meeting was held at which Fr. Coen praised the action of the tenants. The whole force of the crown in Galway were employed, and the fact alone ensured that the policy of evictions would not pay, he claimed. He added:
"On the Lewis property the tenants who were evicted, instead of paying rent would be paid by the landlord for minding their holdings, and on Lord Clanricarde's property instead of having paid for minding their holdings, and on Lord Clanricarde's property instead of having paid the landlord, he would have to pay a large amount to the emergency men . . . which would amount to £200 a year".

The tremendous excitement and emotional scenes which accompanied the Woodford Evictions was heightened the following month at the trial in Woodford of Fr. Fahy P.P., of Duniry. He was converted to National League Policies by Fr. Egan and was put on trial for allegedly using threatening language against J. P. Lewis, son and agent of Mrs. Hannah Lewis.

"It being a fair day in Woodford the town was crowded with people. Mr. Lewis who approached, under police protection, accompanied by his solicitor, was groaned". Fr. Fahy, on the other hand,
"was received with cheers and was borne on the shoulders of the people to the courthouse. Lewis, in evidence, stated that he had ejectment decrees against some tenants in the hands of the sheriff, when Fr. Fahy came to his house:
"stampted on the floor, and said that I could not go on with the evictions against the power of the people, and if I made an arrangement with my tenants, as Sir Henry Burke did, I would not require police protection, and that if I went on with the evictions before six months were over, my house would be blown up and my life taken".

Fr. Fahy denied Lewis' evidence, but nevertheless was convicted. he was given a choice of £100 bail, or six months in jail. After consulting his clerical brethren, Fr. Fahy, although suffering from chronic bronchitis,
"declared his intention of going to jail, and to fight the Land War in Connacht to the bitter end".

In the general excitement created by the trial, eighteen others were arrested. Disturbances broke out in Galway at the arrival of Fr. Fahy, and the other prisoners. "Fr. Fahy was met at the railway station by about 4,000 persons who rescued him from the police, and escorted him to the jail at his own pleasure".

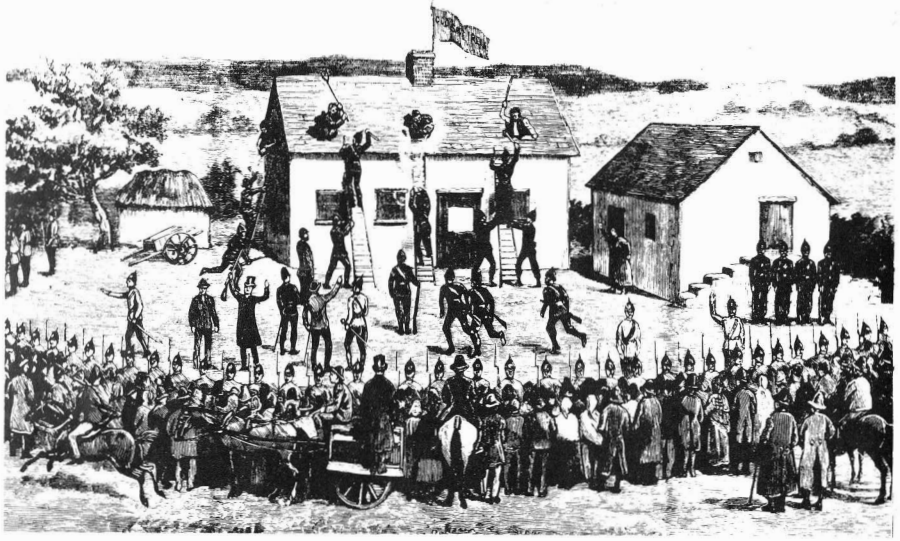
The next evening, at the arrival of the other prisoners, more serious clashes occurred. The window and lamps of the jail were broken. "The police were attacked by a crowd, numbering several thousand, and in the melee several were wounded".

When twelve of these prisoners were later released from jail, rather than go in police cars, they walked the twelve miles to Loughrea, from where they were driven to a tumultous welcome in Woodford, with bands and large crowds. "Speeches were delivered from the National League Hall, and the town was illuminated and portraits of Lord Clanricarde burnt".

Thomas Feeney — The Woodford Evictions (1976).

The eviction of Thomas Saunders of Drummin was scheduled to take place on Friday, August 20th. It was postponed for several days, however, so that a battering ram could be brought from Birr. Use of the battering ram would speed up eviction proceedings, by swiftly breaking down the barricades erected for the defence of the holding. The fact that a battering ram was to be brought from Birr was well known in the locality, and the Bridge at Kilmanahan was knocked down in order to prevent it from being taken to Doorus, Woodford. The evicting party was able to build a temporary bridge, however, so that the cars and carts could continue their journey. The roads leading to Saunder's house were cut, and in the immediate vicinity of the house, large trees were felled and placed across the road. Thousands of people assembled in response to the ringing of Chuch bells.

At the Saunder's home, renamed Saunder's Fort because of its elaborate barricades, the crowd was driven back by ther soldiers and possession was demanded. The bailiffs were directed to force an entrance. The evicting party advanced protected by a shelter shed, which they placed against the wall. The twenty-one young men inside the house rolled large stones on to the shed, but the shed was sufficiently strong to withstand the avalanche. The bailiffs were under attack for over two hours. Stones, sticks, boat-hooks, gaffs and swarms of bees were hurtled through the roof, with the usual quantities of boiling water and lime. The plan formulated prior to the attack, was that the bailiffs should not enter the house, but that the police should do so, in order to arrest the young men for obstruction of the sheriff. The police delayed for several hours before going in. Eventually they advanced. Twenty one men were arrested and when tried at Sligo Assizes, they were sentenced to between twelve and eighteen months imprisonment; the green flag on which 'No Surrender' had been painted was taken from the roof of the house and Saunder's Fort was taken.



The Siege of "Saunders Fort".

The house of a man named Saunders at Drummin two miles from Woodford held out in spite of the most determined and ingenious efforts. A green flag floated from one of the chimneys with the mottoes "No Surrender" and "God Save Ireland" up on it and for two days the siege was discontinued. The Police and military had their headquarters at Portumna which is about ten miles distant and were partially boycotted, the traders having received a warning not to supply them. This was rather hard upon the traders as they had been receiving about £180 a day and some of them had killed cattle and laid in stores in expectation of supplying the troops. The men were obliged to obtain bread meat and other provisions from Birr and other places. On Friday the forces of police and military were enabled to resume the offensive, the Property Defence men having obtained a portable shelter of corrugated iron to shield them from the boiling showers, while they worked away below to effect a breach. They also put up temporary bridges and the line of communication was kept open by a line of constabulary pickets. The enemy were not less vigilant and active. Scouts were posted on the hilltops, and men on horseback and on foot, provided with horns, gave notice of every movement. A large crowd of men, including contingents from distant places, converged on the scene, ready to act in obedience to orders. They did not seem to like the duty but they dared not refuse to attend after receiving instructions.

About 5 o'clock in the morning the bugle call was heard and the military forces consisting of 200 of the Somerset Light Infantry were soon on the march, six deep to Drummem (sic). The police set out at about 7 o'clock on vehicles of all kinds, numbering 100, chiefly breaks and cars. As if to give a business aspect to the siege train, one of the long cars had inscribed on it the name of O'Connell with the name of the "Grand Old Man". About half-way on the road, as previ-

ously arranged, the constabulary overtook the soldiers and gave them up the vehicles, while they marched the rest of the journey on foot ... Straggling groups of boys and girls were met on the road. Some were seated on a fence and watched the cavalcade with much curiosity. A large crowd had assembled at Drummin, and the first measure taken by the police was to push them back some distance. Some excitement was then caused by a bailiff named Page, who resigned his office and gave up his gun to the Rev. Mr. Coen (sic). The Rev. gentleman held it triumphantly aloft and the incident became sensational. He was remonstrated with by Mr. E. Brady R.M. and explained that he had only wanted the people to know that Page has resigned. The besiegers then went to work in earnest and the struggle was on both sides determined. The garrison, finding that the portable roof was impenetrable by the boiling fluid which they poured out freely, attempted to break holes in it by striking it with long spear-pointed poles or to cast it from the wall by grappling it. On the other hand, the besiegers tried by means of a pole to drive the men from the loopholes in the roof and sides, but the pole was siezed and drawn in as a trophy. They flung down large stones on the roof but failed to break it, and finally brought up their reserve, a basket of bees which they uncovered and let loose. The expedient failed and recoiled upon themselves, for some of the bees rushed back into the house while others pursued individuals in the crowd, and chased them to the amusement of the bystanders.

An attempt was then made by the besiegers to raise a ladder to a window, but it was gaffed with forked sticks and flung back. At length, after nearly two hours had been spent with scarcely an perceptible impression, a signal was given and three ladders were raised at the front of the house and three at the back simultaneously, by the police ad the bailiffs. They were quickly mounted by the police with drawn swords and the men, having been driven from the loopholes, the storming party sprang into the house and arrested 20 men who were inside.

Mr. Brady R.M. was the first to ascend. When the defenders saw that the place had been stormed, one of them attempted to escape through a gable window, but was caught and handcuffed like the rest, and the whole party was brought off and lodged in Galway Gaol. In the kitchen a large fire was found with three pots of water on it and a bag of lime close at hand, and great heaps of paving stones piled against the walls.

The green flag was hauled down as was also the white one, which was put up by the Property Defence men, and the party, having effected the object of the expedition, returned to Portumna. A few stones were thrown at them, but no serious disturbance took place.

Report in 'The Times' of London, Monday August 30 1886

Saunders' Fort

'The siege of Saunders' Fort, even though officers of the law have been given occasion to remember it all the days of their lives, will have served a satisfactory end, if it enforces upon the consciences of the British people one of the evils peculiar to Ireland, which is apt to be lost sight of amid the clamour raised

around the sins of the Land Leaguers and Home Rulers. The evil is the deep and festering sore of absenteeism. As a correspondent remarks in another column, ought the poverty of Ireland, which is often charged against her people as a crime rather than regarded as a misfortune, to be a subject of surprise "when half or more of the produce goes every year as a tribute to the absentees"? *(from the 'Pall Mall Gazette', London, August 31 1886).*

Pall Mall Gazette Friday Dec. 10 1886
The Story of the Woodford Evictions - Conclusion

The 'Pall Mall Gazette' and its Editor W.T. Stead

by M.J. Shiel

In this book the reader will find extracts from the London 'Pall Mall Gazette'. In its championship of the Irish tenants' cause among the corridors of power at Westminster it was indefatigable. It is impossible however, to refer to the newspaper without also referring to its distinguished Editor at the time - W.T. Stead.

The 'Pall Mall Gazette' began as a Conservative supporter in 1865 (a paper 'written by gentlemen for gentlemen'). Among its original contributors were Anthony Trollope, George Eliot and Matthew Arnold. In 1880, after the paper had become Liberal, Stead, then editor of the 'Darlington Echo' joined as Assistant Editor and became Editor in 1883. He was a brilliant and influential journalist, nd threw himself wholeheartedly into the Irish cause. He personally came on a long visit to Ireland in 1886, nd spent a considerable period in East Galway investigating the evictions and their background. The result was a splendid series of articles, 'The Story of the Woodford Evictions', under the pseudonym 'Our Special Commissioner', which without doubt made a tremendous impact on public opinion in England. He considered this series so important, that he had it republished separately as a 'P.M.G. Extra'.

Stead was, in his very essence, a crusader and this eventually landed him into trouble. In one particular crusade against vice, he published a series of articles, the 'Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon', purporting to further the Criminal Law Amendment Bill. The Bill was passed, but the articles eventually led to his imprisonment for three months in Holloway Gaol. Because of this he was forced to resign from the paper in 1889 and was succeeded by E.T. Cook. He left behind a 'P.M.G.' which remained staunchly behind Home Rule until its purchase by Lord Astor in 1892, and re-conversion into a Conservative paper. Cook and his key staff promptly resigned.

Stead went on to found many new papers, which reflected his fervid committment to reform and to the cause of peace. His brilliant career came to an untimely end when he went down in the 'Titanic' on April 15, 1912.

In the Year of '86

The very first scene that met my view
was saddening, I declare;
It was Captain Moonlight I beheld
Whose doings are so queer.
This black-faced man cannot be blamed,
If the landlords drop their tricks
The captain would not be alive then,
In the year of '86.

The next scene was Saunders' Fort
with the forces of the crown
Evicting that bold Irishman
Near famous Woodford town.
For his home he fought most manfully,
And made a gallant stand;
For o'er his house the green flag waved
With God save Ireland.

The police and the soldiers,
They wished the scene was o'er
While the cowardly bailiffs like demons
Attacked the roof and door;
But Saunders' men they drove them back
With hot water, stones and sticks
It was a sorry scene, indeed,
In the year of '86.

The next was Father Fahy
Who couldn't see his people die
From hunger and starvation
To save them he did try.
For doing this for six long months
He pined in Galway Jail
He said "I did commit no crime
I'll not go out on bail".

When he arrived in Galway town
He was met by thousands there,
The people all had turned out,
Their voice rang through the air;
Twice they thought to rescue him,
And then with stones and sticks
They attacked the jail in Galway Town,
In September '86.

Tommy Larkin
(1864 - 1887)

Tommy was born at Gurteeny, Woodford, in 1864, in a house at the rear of the Post Office and Tommy Leonard's Garage. He was the only son of Peter Larkin, and had two sisters, Bridget and Mary, later becoming Bridget Hynes and Mary White, after they both married in Douras. The Larkin family suffered from ill health, even when the children were very young, and their school attendance records were very poor. Tommy defended Saunders Fort on Aug. 20th, 1886, until arrested after a week-long siege with twenty-two others. Local tradition states that when a constable treated a young girl roughly, and prevented her from going to her mother, Tommy struck him a blow with his fist, and was a marked man henceforth. At the Sligo Court Assizes in Dec. 1886, Constable James Donohue identified him as the man who had scalded him with boiling water, and thus he was sentenced to 18 months imprisonment with hard labour in Kilkenny jail, by Chief Baron Pallas, having already served five months in Galway jail. While in prison, Tommy worked at the carpenter's bench all day, and had to pick oakum in his cell at night, but being of delicate disposition, his health deteriorated quickly, and he died on Tuesday, 27th Sept. 1887, exactly one year and a month after his arrest. The jury returned an incriminating verdict of "neglect by the prison doctor, Zachary Johnson, who had treated him for diarrhoea two days previously, and should have removed him from his cold prison cell to hospital". The prison governor stated at the inquest that "he first heard of Larkin's illness four days before his death", but "didn't remove him from his cell, or tell the night warden", who could not get into his cell, since only the governor had the key. A crowd of over 4 thousand people attended his funeral in Kilkenny, from the jail to the railway station, led by two brass bands playing the Dead March, which the Irish Times later reported as "being a very impressive sight" (Oct. 5th, 1887, edition). All the Woodford Land League leaders attended, including Pat Keary and John Roche, with the Mayor of Kilkenny and William O'Brien, who spoke from the hotel window: "Let us be proud of him, because he has made the cause of Ireland a sacred and unconquerable cause". The coffin was brought by train to Birr, and from there by side-car via Portumna to Looscaun Church, as thousands lined the road from Birr to Woodford. Later his body was brought on a bier to Abbey Cemetery, followed by the Woodford Brass Band, and a crowd estimated at between eight and ten thousand people. This was the largest funeral ever seen in East-Galway, according to the old-timers, even to this day, with a total estimated attendance of approx. 20,000 people between Kilkenny, Birr, Looscaun and Abbey. In the Nationalist Press, Larkin was numbered with the heros of Mitchlestown and Coolgreaney, but when his father returned from the funeral, an ejectment decree from Clanricarde awaited him. Already a plaque has been unveiled near his home at Gurteeny, and plans are afoot by the Tommy Larkin's G.A.A. Club to commemorate him in his own Larkin Memorial Park during the Centenary Week's celebrations in Aug. 1986. A fund has also been opened by the Woodford Heritage Group to erect a headstone over his unmarked grave in Abbey.

Cathal Stanley

The Lords of the Soil
"Eva of the Nation"

Ye Gentlemen of Ireland, who stand upon the sod
Where once your gallant ancestors in pride and freedom trod!
Have ye no thought or feeling high, that marked your noble race?
In word, or look, or deed may we, that regal lineage trace?

The broad lands of your fathers, still stretch before you there
Your homes are on that hallow'd ground, but not as their homes were;
The emerald fields you call your own, at what a price you hold!
Each free-born thought and word of yours, unto your masters sold!

The Ballad of Tommy Larkin

by Mick Stone

You feeling Christians, I pray attend,
While I sing these verses, I have lately penned
The tears of anguish down my cheeks do sail
Since they killed my boy in Kilkenny Jail.

Thomas Larkin was my dear son's name
From the County Galway his parents came
For being noble in a neighbour's cause
He was done to death by Tory Laws.

At Gurteeny, Woodford, my darling child
Oft roamed in freedom through the meadows wild,
Till the crowbar faction one morning came
To evict some tenants, to the agent's shame.

My son, Tommy, though quite a boy
Saw the sheriff wreck each house with joy
But when a bailiff gave a child a blow
My courageous, Tommy, soon laid him low.

For this noble action, my only son
Into the prison was quickly run
Far, far away from his parents dear,
They locked my boy in a prison drear.

The only son of an elderly pair,
Whom we educated with the greatest care;
A finer young man you could not pass
In the town of Woodford going to Mass.

In Kilkenny jail, that living hell,
They threw my boy in a narrow cell,
And kept him pining both night and day
Till the flesh decayed from his bones away.

When I saw his corpse coming from the cell
I did not know the truth to tell
His cheeks were sunken as if in distress
And the Coroner's verdict may tell the rest.

God bless the clergy who came that day
To see my boy in the train away.
There were Fathers Dalton and Corcoran,
Rowan, Brennan and more clergymen.

The "guard" procession, its way did wind
You'd think it was never going to end
The sight imposing was very grand
As they marched along with their noble band.

Upon each brow was the sign of care
O'Brien (William) in mourning, with our Lord Mayor,
Not a word was spoken by one at all
While the band did play "The Dead March in Saul".

May the God of Mercy receive his soul,
May Our Blessed Lady, his friends console,
Peter Larkin his son bewail,
He was doomed to death in Kilkenny Jail.

Patrick Duggan, Bishop of Clonfert 1872 - 1896

P.K. Egan

Patrick Duggan was born in 1813 in the parish of Cummer in the archdiocese of Tuam, the son of John Duggan and Penelope Canavan. He was reared by his uncle, Father Canavan, the parish priest of Cummer, and went to school first in the little thatched chapel there and then to St Jarlath's College in Tuam. Entering Maynooth College in 1833, he read a brilliant course which carried him to the Dunboyne in 1839. After ordination in 1841, he returned as curate to Cummer, having volunteered without success for missionary work in the Southern Hemisphere. Within a few years the horror of famine swept the land. Father Duggan was in the thick of it, and it left a deep and lasting impression on his mind. He had sold all he had to feed the starving people and gone into lodgings. He had seen the dogs eat the corpses of the dead. He had even known of cannibalism, and he had enlarged the five churchyards in his parish to take

Bishop Duggan of Clonfert.

the hundreds of corpses which came. The after effects of the Famine so appalled him that he offered in 1862, through Sir John Grey, to take 400 families to Canada and set them up there, if he could get a government loan with annual repayments. His offer was not taken up. 'It is little wonder', said his biographer, 'that such an advanced man should be called an extremist, albeit he was the gentlest of souls'.

His great merits did not go unnoticed and while parish priest of Cummer, where he had succeeded his uncle, Father Canavan, he was appointed to the see of Clonfert in 1872. His episcopate there extended to his death in 1896. During that time the land agitation worked itself out. Beginning with the Galway (Nolan and Trench) election at the time of his appointment, until his retirement from active work in 1890, he was passionately involved in the movement to obtain for the tenantry the right to permanence in their holdings at a fair rent, with the option to sell their interest.

In 1872 the last Marquis of Clanricarde, then Lord Canning Burke, had resigned from the parliamentary represention of County Galway. Captain Nolan,

a landlord of Cummer and a Catholic, wished to contest the seat and sought the help of his parish priest. Unfortunately, Nolan had some time before, evicted tenants from his Portacarron property in Connemara so Father Duggan refused unless the tenants were reinstated. Nolan agreed to arbitration, the outcome of which was the Portacarron Award, a formal agreement signed on the steps of Cummer Church and embodying the principles which Father Duggan had long fought for, namely, fair rent, free sale and fixity of tenure. On these principles, the archbishop of Tuam and the bishop of Galway also gave their overt support to Nolan, who won the election against the combined opposition of Tory and Whig. Nolan was unseated on petition, bu it was a moral victory for the tenants, and an end to landlord dominance over the elctorate of County Galway.

When the Land League was founded by Michael Davitt in the eighteen-seventies, it found in Dr Duggan a most ardent patron. He realized the value of active agitation, knowing too well the futility of mere petition. Too long he had pocketed his pride to beg for his starving people. He now stood out fearlessly, braving the calumny which sought to lay at his door the agrarian crimes which found their true cause in the system of land ownership. The famine of 1879 came on and the bishop who, as parish priest of Cummer in the famine of '47, had sold his house and furniture, his horse and saddle and pawned his top-coat to feed the people, now sold his goods in the same cause. His pen worked overtime pleading for help, and the response from abroad averted what might have been a second disaster. The ensuing Land League was supported by numbers of his priests, encouraged by him.

When the agitation erupted again in 1886 in the Plan of Campaign, some of his priests were involved in the estates on which it took fire. They were fully supported by him and together they were a restraining force on the extreme elements, succeeding in the main in keeping the agitation within constitutional bounds. When misrepresentation at Rome called forth a condemnation of the 'Plan', Dr Duggan bowed obediently to the terms of the order, but he knew that soon the morality of the combine would be recognised, which it was.

He had things to say on the Richmond Commission in 1880. 'I approve of peasant proprietary on social grounds', he said; 'If I had the power I would make 100,000 proprietors at the stroke of a pen, but not by dispossessing any man of his property, which would be unjust'. He would give him motives to part with it of his own free will. And he believed the landlord had no right to impose rent on property he never created, property created by others. The tenant should be rooted in the soil, either as proprietor, or by lease for life renewable for ever. He would establish a land commission, and when property came to be sold, would buy it and divide it on tenants, but would not favour any scheme of emigration. He would carry out arterial drainage at public expense, and he would extend the railways. The Land Act of 1881 followed and the Land Commission was set up. He played a significant part in these achievements.

It is true that he loved the Irish people above all else, save his God. Sympathy with them in sorrow or joy, in failure or triumph, was felt by him 'in the deep heart's core'. He was called a Fenian by Wilfred Blunt. But the latter had two faults. He was unable to discern when not to take the remarks of an Irishman seriously, and he talked too much. Yet we are indebted to him for elsewhere calling the grand old bishop by the noblest title of all, 'A hero and a saint'.

His colleagues in the episcopacy voted him the best Irish speaker of the day, while he himself said, 'I can make my listeners do anything when I speak to them in Irish'. He gave advice to Father O'Growney on language preservation, advice on which the latter was glad to act.

In the August of 1884, at the instance of Michael Cusack, a deputation waited on the aged prelate, and asked his blessing and patronage for the infant Gaelic Athletic Association. Wholeheartedly, he entered into the spirit of the project, but pleading his advancing years, he recommended that they approach Dr Croke, the archbishop of Cashel, who would be willing to give the best that was in him for the cause. His prediction proved correct.

Dr Duggan's life had been a stormy one, but the last years were spent in tranquility, when the burden was transferred to the shoulders of a coadjutor. He could now rejoice that tenant right had been wrung from government and unwilling landlord. The wrong he had ever fought against was righted. His life work was done.

One aspect of his life he would not wish to have stressed - the spiritual; for he was never an advertiser of his piety. Only the Recording Angel will do justice to his saintly life. that he was a saintly man, we know from scattered information of his private life. We hear of long hours spent in adoration, of little children eagerly seeking his blessing, of ragged beggars gathered round his door, waiting for the daily allowance they knew would not be forgotten.

Dr Duggan did not stand on ceremony. His life had been marked by simplicity and absence of fuss. His death too, it might be said, was typical of him. A sudden stroke, a short illness, and on August 15, 1896 he passed to his reward. In his death were fulfilled the three wishes of his life. He died on the feast of the Assumption, in a Dublin hospital, and is buried in Glasnevin near the grave of his dear friend and classfellow, Edward, Cardinal McCabe.

Matt Harris M.P. Ballinasloe (1825 - 1890)

The son of a building contractor, and a slater himself by trade, Matt Harris was an active Fenian from 1865, shortly before the attempted Rebellion of 1867. He was also active in the Repeal and Young Ireland Movement from an early age, and indeed patriotically supported any organisation that promoted Irish freedom and nationality. By 1870, Matt was already importing and distributing arms from England, including some from Michael Davitt, whom he probably got to know through Fenian activities, the Supreme Council Representative for the West of Ireland. I 1873, he supported Butt's Home Rule Movement, and with fellow-Fenian, John Devoy, was one of the principle architects behind "The New Departure", which allowed Fenians to work with parliamentarians in order to obtain reforms, especially the abolition of landlordism. In 1876, Harris and another Fenian, named Michael Malachy O'Sullivan, (a national teacher at a Catholic College in Ballinasloe), formed the Tenants Defence Association of Ballinasloe, (see T.W. Moody's "Davitt", 1982). According to T.P. O'Connor, this local organisation, "did more than any other to beget the Land League". Among its active members, were James Gilmartin (Chairman),

James Callanan (Proprietor of "Western News"), Andrew Manning, Patrick Dunne and John Egan, a native of Ahascragh, and many others who joined later. Harris and O'Sullivan addressed various meetings in East Galway 1876-'77, with crowds of up to 5,000 people, and together with James Daly, Editor of the Castlebar Telegraph, they laid the foundation of "The Land League" in Connacht. Davitt was released after seven years detention in 1877, and after visiting Daly and his native county, he went to see Harris in Ballinasloe on Jan. 31st, 1878. Davitt was later to support Harris in his public defence of the "New Departure" (Jan. 1879) at an I.R.B. Supreme Council Meeting in Paris, and likewise John Devoy, who visited the West secretly later in the Spring of 1879 to meet Harris. Shortly afterwards, Davitt launched The Land League though the original idea and method of operation came from Harris who had formed the embryo of the movement already in East Galway Pall Mall Gazette Extra: "The Story of the Woodford Evictions". In 1880, both Harris and Davitt were ejected from the Supreme Council of the I.R.B. (which again shows their shared views and friendship) because of their continued support for the New Departure, the basis of this being, that the land question was the one issue that could unite Home Rulers and Nationalists, including Fenians. From 1880 on, Harris concentrated on the Land League, after being appointed organiser (Jan. 1880) and later elected to the National Executive (April); he addressed numerous meetings in East Galway, and helped to organise branches in Gurteen, Athenry, Creggs, Mountbellew and Ballinasloe early in 1880, including Craughwell with Martin O'Halloran, Kiltulla, late in 1879. The latter organised a monster meeting of 10,000 people in Kiltulla, August 22nd, 1880, and this was addresed by Parnell and Harris, leading to the formation of further Land League branches at Kiltulla, Athenry, Kilchreest, Loughrea, Killeenadeema, Leitrim, and others later in Ballaun, Kilrickle and Leitrim.

Harris spoke at another monster meeting, Sept. 19th. 1880, at Riverville on the Dunsandle Estate, over the eviction of Martin Bermingham; a week later at Killenadeema Sept. 26th, and twice at Killimor in March and April 1881, regarding the eviction of the Widow Dempsey at Kylebeg, Mullagh. Arrested with Parnell, Dillon and other Land Leaguers on Nov. 2nd, 1881, Harris had earlier proposed a national no rent strike (Feb.) now to be adopted by Parnell from Kilmainham Jail. Matt's influence was also evident in O'Brien's appointment as editor of the new paper, "United Ireland" Aug. 1881, following his nomination by Harris previously. After his release in Aug. '82, Harris continued his work for the Land League, and was elected M.P. for East-Galway from 1885, until his death in 1890, during which period he played a leading role on the Clanricarde estate, especially during the Plan of Campaign in the Woodford area. Since his work from 1880 to 1890 is already well documented by Anne O Maille and Tom Feeney, to be published later this year, I will conclude here with a brief word of general evaluation and appreciation. Matt was an indefatigable organiser and tireless defender of Irish tenants, and his conversion from Fenian armed rebellion to Land League organisation and parliamentary agitation, had a great influence on other Nationalists with Fenian ideas, whom he also convinced that the National Question would not be pushed into the background by the Land Agitation. Like John Dillon and Bishop Duggan, Matt's unselfish and life-long work for the suffering Irish has yet to be

evaluated nationally, but like them he will not be forgotton in Ballinasloe and East Galway, or in the land of everlasting justice and peace.

Cathal Stanley.

John Dillon M.P. (1851 - 1927)

John's father, John Blake Dillon, was a leader of the Young Irelanders, and emigrated to America after the Rising of 1848, during which time John was born when his mother visited Dublin from New York. After an earlier flirtation with some of his father's Fenian friends and the I.R.B., he joined the Home Rule League in 1875, and later adopted Parnell's parliamentary obstructionist policy, as against Butt's "sham parliametary representation", to achieve "setting up a parliament in Dublin" in 1877. In the same year, he joined the "Tenants Right Association" and met William O'Brien, who was to become his closest friend and ally in the agrarian movement. Even at this early stage, John Dillon felt that "the national struggle would essentially have to be fought out upon the question of land", which was the key to national re-generation, with "agitation at every level as the key to success". Conscious of the agricultural depression and inclement weather from 1876 to 1879, especially in the West of Ireland, where his family roots lay (Ballaghdareen), he proposed strong resolutions on land policy at a full meeting of the Home Rule League (1879) shortly before the Land League was launched by Davitt at Castlebar on Aug. 16th '79. Elected later in Dublin to the national committee of the Land League, Dillon had already advocated the principle of boycotting "landgrabbers", one year before its adoption in the West, and in the same speech at Maryborough, he urged tenants to offer their landlords rents of only 50% or 60% which ideas was later to become seminal to "The Plan of Campaign". In further speeches, he attacked the government for arresting Davitt and some Land Leaguers, while ignoring the "famine conditions and starving people" that they were seeking to eliminate (Nov. 1879), before accompanying Parnell to the U.S.A., seeking funds for the League to help the families of the West of Ireland (Christmas 1879). Returning in July 1880, after being elected in his absence as M.P. for Tipperary in the General Elections, Dillon supported Parnell's new Irish Party of 24 M.P.s at Westminster, in their "Compensation for Disturbance Bill" as redress for the evicted tenants; but after three readings and considerable support, it was finally defeated on Aug. 3rd. Disillusioned with London's parliamentary indifference, Dillon returned to Ireland, and urged people to organise "and help themselves, and to resist eviction, by force if necessary" while warning the Government of "bloodshed and a massacre to come in Ireland", with "the revenge of despairing men". Later he was appointed the Leagues' Chief Organiser to succeed Davitt (in Jail) at a meeting in Paris (Feb. 1881), and after further hard-hitting speeches, he was arrested on May 2nd and locked in Kilmainham Jail, until released on August 6th for health reasons. Gladstone's Land Act became Law on Aug. 22nd, but unlike Parnell and most of the Irish M.P.s, he felt that it would not be effective, as he was proved correct, eventually.

In October, 1881, the Liberal Government had Parnell and some of the League Leaders, arrested, later to be joined in Kilmainham by O'Brien and Dillon, despite the latter's release on May 2nd, 1882, after the so called, Kilmainham Treaty. Dillon had already opposed Parnell's "No Rent Manifesto", which had incited widespread agrarian outrages culminating in the Phoenix Park murders of Cavendish and Burke (May 6th), but Parnell's deal with Gladstone for their release and promise to end the Land War, in exchange for amendments to the Land Act, 1881, was the main reason for his subsequent resignation in Sept., though ostensibly on health grounds. Despite intense pressure nationally, Dillon left for a recuperative stay in Italy Jan. 1883 and later with his brother in the U.S.A. and was not to return for over two years in July '85, when he resumed an active role against Landlordism and was elected to the Irish National League Central Branch in Oct. '85. Dillon continued to maintain a facade of unity with Parnell in the run up to the General Election, and accepted a nomination for Mayo and the marginal constituency of North Tyrone, though appalled by the nomination of Capt. O'Shea for Galway City by Parnell. After the defeat of Gladstone's Home Rule Bill (June '86), Dillon called the London Parliament's attention to the plight of the Clanricarde tenants, especially at Woodford, where evictions had resumed in August, but the defeat of Parnell's Tenant Relief Bill in Sept. saw him rise from the Irish benches in an angry and defiant speech: "I go back to tell the people of Ireland to continue their persistant agitation...and that they will win, in spite of Irish landlords and this House, the right to live as freemen in the land of their birth". (See John Dillon, a biography, by F.S. Lyons (1968)).

As my purpose here has been merely to trace the major role of John Dillon in the struggle for land and liberty up to The Plan of Campaign (Oct. 1886), where his work on behalf of the Clanricarde tenants is already covered in this book, I shall conclude with a few brief remarks about his life and achievements generally. From the tenants viewpoint, Dillon was their real leader from about 1881 on, and had Parnell stepped aside even as President of the National League in 1882 or had the public facade between them vanished even in 1886, the story of Ireland's evicted tenants, and Clanricarde's particularly (1886-1891), would certainly have been different. During their darkest hour, John Dillon gave the Irish tenants courage and self-respect, and his own integrity and dependability, combined with his oratorical power and balanced judgement, mark him out as one of the most unappreciated giants of Irish democracy. As William O'Brien wrote in "United Ireland" (Sept. 1882): "the country recognises in him a unique figure, whose place no other man can quite fill", while on that same occasion "The Freemans Journal" paid him his greatest tribute: "Mr. Dillon, perhaps more than other men, is beloved by the Irish People".

Cathal Stanley

NOTE: These short biographical profiles may seem rather incomplete or imbalanced, but are centered around their relationship with the East Galway land combination and The Plan of Campaign. In our next publication, we will deal with some of the leaders in a more general perspective, e.g. Davitt and Parnell. Ed.

John Dillon and The Plan of Campaign

"It was with this situation in view that on 4 August, 1886, the Irish party passed a resolution warning the Government that payment of the judicial rents would be impossible. When Parliament reassembled later that month, Parnell moved an amendment to the Address — which was seconded by Dillon — calling attention to the plight of the tenants, especially those on the Clanricarde estates at Woodford, where evictions were again in progress. Parnell's career up to that time had been a strange chiaroscuro, hesitating between the extremes of brassy publicity and almost total inaccessibility. Now, in the autumn of 1886, he melted once more into the shadows, remaining there for the better part of the next eighteen months, and appearing fleetingly and enigmatically only when driven by absolute necessity. The vacuum thus created was filled by a triumvirate the three men who, through the National League, United Ireland and the apparatus of public meetings, exercised most influence in the country. These were Dillon himself, William O'Brien, and the secretary of the League, Timothy Harrington. using the National League as their base of operations, they met in Dublin to frame a policy that would give the tenants the kind of protection which the Government, following the rejection of Parnell's bill, could not or would not afford.

As early as 28 September, Dillon, speaking in Dublin at the Central Branch of the League, advised the tenants to organise themselves by estates for the coming struggle, and on 17 October, speaking at Woodford, in the heart of the already restless Clanricarde country, he gave the first glimpse of what this might mean in practice:

"When we meet with an estate where the people are courageous and determined, we advise them to meet together, each estate by itself, and decide what (rent reduction) is fair to ask, and ask that together, and if they are refused there is but one course open to them, if they meann to fight according to the policy for brave men-that is, to pay a portion of the rent which they have offered to the landlord, into the hands of two or three men in whome they place trust. That must be done privately, and you must not inform the public where the money is placed. Thus every man who is evicted can get an allowance from them as long as he is out and, believe me, if the landlord sees that, he won't go very far ...

"This advice has, of course, a familiar ring. it is substantially the same advice which as we saw earlier, first Healy and then Dillon had given the tenants the previous year. And even since then, in January 1886, the police had noticed that in East-Galway branches of the League had been trying to put a similar policy into practice, though not, apparently, to any great effect except on the Clanricarde estate, where little or no rent was paid, after the landlord had refused a request for a 50 per cent abatement. Dillon's speech was not an isolated incident, but the prologue to something much more serioous. How serious was indicated by the document which appeared in United Ireland on 23 October. It was entitled 'A Plan of Campaign', and in it the author (anonymous, but known to have been Timothy Harrington) recommended the

scheme put forward by Dillon a week earlier, as one suitable for doption by the tenants generally. Immediately the Plan was made public Dillon, O'Brien and other M.P.'s descended upon various key points, mostly in the south and west, to explain it to the tenants and to help them carry it out. The most critical situation was in Galway on the Clanricarde estates, and it was there, in the little town of Portumna, that Dillon and O'Brien gave the first demonstration of the new tactics. On 18 November the landlords agent was in his office waiting to receive the rents from the tenantry. ßTo his astonishment, four hundred of them marched into the town with banners flying, and a brass band blaring to greet the two exponents of the Plan who had just arrived. After speeches from the visitors explaining what the tenants should do, the procession marched to the land agent's office and told him they would pay their rents less a 40 per cent reduction, and even that only if the Woodford farmers evicted the previoous August were reinstated. The agent flabbergasted, replied that he had no power to agree to any such terms. 'This means war!' exclaimed one of the tenants' representatives, and the four hundred moved off again to the strains of 'The Minstrel Boy', back to the hotel where Dillon and O'Brien were staying. There, they paid over to the two leaders the rents less 40 per cent, on the agreement that these would be lodged in the bank on the tenants' behalf. And that night, with a torchlight procession and the inevitable band, they escorted their distinguished guests triumphantly out of the town.

"The Portumna rent collection naturally received the utmost publicity in the nationalist Press, and it provided the model for a number of others in different parts of the country. Within a matter of weeks it became clear that, unless checked, the organisers of the Plan had hit upon a device which could make life very difficult for a great many landlords.

"On 26 November, 1886, Dillon was cited before the court of Queen's Bench to give bail for 'good behaviour' and at the same time a meeting due to be held in Sligo to advance the Plan was 'proclaimed'. Neither of these moves affected the situation in the slightest. Dillon secured an adjournment, the Sligo meeting was held and the rent collection continued. When Dillon's case eventually came to trial on 13 December he used the courtroom as the platform for a powerful speech in defence of the Plan, making the point, which came uncomfortably near the bone, that the kind of pressure he was urging the tenants to bring to bear against the landlords, was not markedly different from that which the Chief Secretary had already tried to exert upon them:

"I want to know (he asked) if it is going to be the decision of this court that where we are engaged in an attempt to save the people from ruin and extermination ... not by encourgaing lawlessness and crime ... but by endeavouring to induce the people to substitute, for the methods which they had always adopted in the past ... the methods of public and open organisation ... we are to be brought up before this court, and held to bail for good behaviour, as being persons of ill-fame?

"The short answer to these largely rhetorical questions was 'yes' and the outcome of the case was not only that Dillon had himself to give securities for £2,000 bail, but that the court pronounced the Plan to be 'an absolutely illegal organisation'. This was the signal for which the Government had been waiting. Two days later the police swooped on a rent collection at Loughrea and seized

the rents, the books and trustees, among whom were O'Brien and, inevitably, Dillon. Although they were released immediately afterwards, the Plan was duly proclaimed on 18 December as 'an unlawful and criminal conspiracy'. The end result was entirely predictable — the prosecution failed to get the jury it wanted and in February 1887, the traversers went free amid great nationalist rejoicing.

"In the weeks following this success for the organisers of the Plan, their agitation reached what was probably the high water mark of its success. Rent collections, although driven underground, continued to be effective, and the plan itself, which in the early weeks had only been adopted on ten or a dozen estates, spread rapidly. Indeed, Dillon himself later reckoned that most of the 116 estates ultimately involved had been affected by the early spring of 1887."

John Dillon — F.S.L. Lyons

Priests in the 'Plan of Campaign'

by P.K. Egan

During the difficult years of 1885 to 1890, when the Woodford tenants struggled with an obdurate landlord for a reduction in rent, they were supported by four parish clergy. There was Rev. Patrick Coen, who succeeded to the parish on the death of Rev. John Larkin in 1885, and died in 1895, to be succeeded by Rev. Patrick Costello. Rev. Patrick Egan was curate there from 1885 until his appointment to the parish of Duniry in 1887. He was succeeded by Rev. William Roche, who was curate in Woodford in the years 1888 to 1891.

Rev. Patrick Coen

Patrick Coen was born about 1834 at Eskerboy in the parish of Mullagh, where members of his family still live. He matriculated in Maynooth in the class of Humanity in March 1858. After his ordination in 1862, he was curate for a short time in Killalaghtan, and then for a longer period (1864-1871) in Kilconieran, where he was administrator **pro tem** in 1872. He came to Woodford as curate in 1873, and succeeded to the parish in 1875, but died on 3rd March, 1889 at the early age of fifty-five.

Father Coen was deeply committed to the cause of the tenants. He had seen the distress of the years 1879 to 1881, and the failure of Clanricarde then to make any meaningful offer to them. But the five years up to 1884, had seen only eight evictions on the property and half of these tenants were reinstated. Renewal of the distress was marked by six evictions in the Spring of 1885 before he became parish priest, though some of these were also reinstated. Father Egan arrived as curate in August; the National League branches in the parish were consolidated by December, and Bishop Healy had been approached to write to Clanricarde on the tenants' behalf. When the executive of the National League refused support, the Woodford tenants decided to proceed alone and formed a Tenants' Defence Association, paying their rents less the abatement they asked for, into a fund beyond the landlords' reach. The two priests were

Rev. Patrick Coen.

actively engaged in all this, and it involved the properties of Clanricarde, Sir Henry Burke and Lewis of Ballinagar.

When the National League accepted the inevitable, and John Dillon promulgated the Plan of Campaign on 17 October, 1886, William T. Stead, the distinguished editor of one of Britain's most prestigious periodicals, the **Pall Mall Gazette,** was on the platform. It fell to Father Coen's lot afterwards to entertain the guests, including John Dillon and William O'Brien with the local M.P.s, David Sheehy and Matt Harris. Stead was among them and recorded his impressions of the parish priest·

"Man and boy he has lived among the people of the district for the lifetime of a generation. He shares their hopes and their fears, rejoices in their success, and sympathises to the full with their detestation of the Vampire-Invisible. He is their natural leader - first in Church, first in politics, first in peace at the festal board, and first in war at the agent's office, or at the great demonstration, when the countryfolk gather in their thousands to declare war against the oppressor. I dined with him, together with Mr. Dillon and half-a-dozen more, and his table was a sight to see. Goose and duck, turkey and ham, a huge leg of mutton, and I know not what beside, all piping hot and admirably served. How his pretty neices ever cooked them over the peat fire in the kitchen is a mystery insoluble, but it was done. But the viands, excellent as they were, would have lost their

flavour without the genial humour of our host, who not only made excellent jokes himself, but laughted with a jolly old world laughter at the jokes of his guests".

Wilfred Blunt paints a different view of clerical dinners in Ireland, where, he said, boiled mutton and little else was on the menu. But Lady Gregory, disapproving of his Irish junket, commented waspishly that he had to leave suddenly, because going there in Lent as a good Catholic, he was expected to fast like his entertainers, but they made up with whiskey and punch, while he being a Mahommedan teetotaller, was set down to salt cod and cold water, and after a fortnight had to make a rush for Paris.

Stead was sensitive to the deeper side of Father Coen's character: "Yet", he said, "Father Coen is no mere humourist. Beneath the good-humoured, careless abandon of his manners, you catch glimpses now and then of a sensitive and passionate heart. The evictions broke him down utterly, and it was with difficulty he restrained himself from sobbing like a child. The widow who voted for the Nationalist gurardian, told me she had given her vote to Father Coen - a phrase which lit up with a little ray of light the extent to which priest and people, Church and National League, are one in Woodford".

The importance of the priests presence at the evictions, could not be overstated. In the intense excitement of the time, the slightest incident could lead to tragedy. On these occasions Fathers Coen and Egan, together with the leaders of the agitation, moved continuously among the people, entreating them not to commit a breach of the peace. Father Coen was deeply affected by the sight of homesteads being torn apart, and precious family items being flung into the street. With tears rolling down his cheeks, he is reported to have continued begging and beseeching the people not to commit any act of violence. The shooting of a process-server in his parish in the early stages of the campaign, must have been a severe blow to him. Shaw Lefevre stated that his death had been accelerated, if not caused, by all the troubles he had gone through, and the distress he had undergone at the treatment of the Woodford tenants. In the six years up to 1885, evictions on Clanricarde's estate averaged only three per year, and many of them were reinstated. In the two years before his death in March, 1889 he saw forty-eight of the families of his parish turned out of their homes. He provided space on the parish land for the huts, which the National League erected for them. That land was rented from Clanricarde and when he withheld his rent he was not ejected, but his horse and car were siezed upon, and other sites had to be provided away from the Clanricarde property. When he died it was becoming evident that the agitation was to have no effect on the landlord's ability and determination not to yield to the tenants' demands.

Rev. Patrick Egan

Patrick Egan, son of Francis Egan of Barrack St., Loughrea, was born in 1854 and educated by the Patrician Brothers at Tullow, Co. Carlow. He matriculated in Philosophy at Maynooth in 1874; was ordained priest in 1878 and worked as curate in Loughrea, until his appointment as president of St. Brendan's Seminary in 1880. He took no part in politics until after the distress of 1879-80 and stated later before one of the Commissions, that his views were

conservative, until he had read of the appalling effects of the famine of 1847. When a second famine threatened in 1879, he became treasurer of the relief committee established by Dr. Duggan. In November of that year, he became secretary to the organising committee of a mass meeting to be held on 6 January, 1880, to launch the Land League in the area, and with the other Loughrea clergy, spoke at the meeting. In one of the resolutions, proposed by Michael Davitt, the agrarian and national movements were linked, when it pledged the use of every constitutional means to secure fair rents and fixity of tenure, as well as a National Parliament in College Green.

In October, 1880 the Land League was suppressed and on December 1st, at a meeting in St. Brendan's Seminary, Father Egan established the National League in Loughrea and remained its president until 1885, when he was transferred as curate to Woodford. The remainder of that year was devoted to the strengthening of the National League there. W.T. Stead, who was at the Woodford scene, recorded his impressions after, as he said, taking the utmost care to obtain the facts. He had gone over the ground with Father Egan, who he described as the life and sould of the anti-Clanricarde campaign, and hand-in-glove with the parish priest, Father Coen, who was president of the local branch of the National League. Father Egan was secretary and regarded as a firebrand

Rev. William Roche.

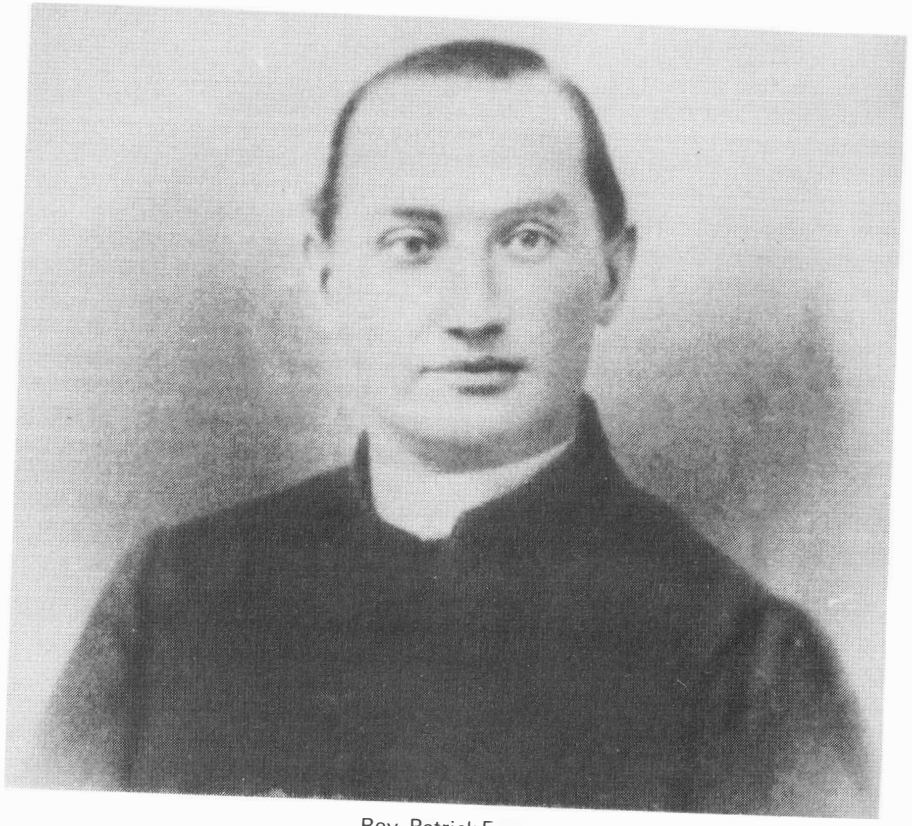
by the landlord section, and by the other side as a patriot priest and leader of the people. 'He is believed', said Stead, 'to be the driving force of this agitation in Woodford, and yet, as he said to me, "Although I get the credit of being so violent, I nearly always am found advocating the adoption of moderate counsels". Moderate or not moderate, his reputation will bring him to gaol before long, unless of course, the triumph of the National League is even more speedy than its members venture to hope'. Father Egan did not go to gaol.

Allegations by the proprietors of **The Times** newspaper, as defendants in an action for libel, that Fathers Coen and Egan with others were implicated in crime, were refuted at the ensuing Special Commission, before which Father Egan gave extensive evidence. It was put to him that he ws a party to the resistance offered at evictions. Personally, he said, he was opposed to putting young men into these houses; his individual view was that it was not safe, although he did not force it on the leaders who knew of it. There are instances recorded of his warning defenders not to resort to violence, but to keep within the law. He reflected very closely the views of Dr. Duggan, his mentor, close to whom he had grown up in Barrack St. and who supported his action at all times. An independent assessment of his contribution comes from the pen of William J. Duffy, then secretary of the National League in Loughrea and later M.P. for South Galway, who wrote in his diary in 1887: 'He (Father Egan) was the life and heart and soul of the campaign in Woodford, and subsequently the chief and principal character in projecting the organisation which is now familiarly styled "The Plan of Campaign".

Like Clanricarde, Lewis of Ballinagar, whose property extended into Father Egan's parish, refused to come to terms to the end. Having evicted seven tenants in August, 1886, he took no further action until 1888 when twenty-two tenants were rendered homeless, with eighteen more in the following two years. But by the end of 1888 the money, which was being paid from central funds through Father Egan for the support of the evicted, began to run out, and from then onward the majority of the tenants settled for the old rent. All other landowners in the area had long since come to terms with their tenantry, but it would take the efforts of parliament and judiciary more than twenty-five years to force Clanricarde to sell his property. It may have afforded Father Egan some satisfaction in 1904, to have negotiated with the Earl of Clancarty the sale of his Loughrea estate to the tenants. He died in 1921.

Rev William Roche

Rev William Roche, son of William Roche of Woodford was born in 1856. He was brother to John Roche, the leader of the Woodford tenants and M.P. for South Galway (1890-1914). Information in regard to him is scanty. He was educated in the Irish College, Paris and was curate in Ballinakill in 1886 when the Plan of Campaign was launched. The following year he was in Woodford, where he remained until 1891 and was involved in the agitation though in ill-health, which would appear to account for his not working for the following three years. In 1894 he was in Ballinasloe; in Woodford again in 1895 and 1896, and in Ballinakill from 1897 to 1900, where he died a young man at the age of forty-four.



Rev. Patrick Egan.

Rev Patrick Costello

Rev Patrick Costello was born in the parish of Leitrim about 1846. He matriculated in the class of Humanity in Maynooth in 1863 and was ordained there in 1872. After spending two years as curate of Kilconnell where he rebuilt the church, he went as curate to Ballinasloe in 1874. There, between 1875 and 1878, he translated from the French and published some cathechetical works of Rev. Antoine Maurel, S.J. He went on a fund raising mission in 1880, and on his return became administrator of the parish. He followed Dr. Duggan's lead in supporting the National League, and when the bishop sought a coadjutor in 1884, he had hoped Fr. Costello would succeed him, but Dr. Healy was appointed. He carried out a major refurbishing of St. Michael's church in the years 1883-1887, culminating in the erection of the spire. He was an exceptionally able man and an indefatigable worker; also a man of deep spirituality and great austerity, who had enormous influence with his people. He was much in demand for preaching and giving missions. That he gave a successful mission in his own parish of Ballinasloe was regarded as somewhat of an achievement. In 1888 he took effective action against an unsavoury proselytising effort directed at orphan Catholic children.

In 1889 Father Costello came as parish priest to Woodford on the death of Father Coen, and made a final effort to settle the land dispute. The tenants authorised him to write to Lord Clanricarde to the effect that they were willing to purchase their holdings at a fair valuation, or to refer all matters in dispute to arbitration, or agree to any moderate terms. He received an insulting reply with a rejection of his proposals. He then appealed to the Chief Secretary, Balfour against the threatened evictions, asking for an impartial commission of enquiry, and a cessation of evictions in the meantime. He was met with a refusal on both counts. Shaw Lefevre took the matter up in parliament, urging the appointment of a commission, to be blandly told by Balfour that Clanricarde had acted no differently from any other creditor, ignoring the fact that the legislature had already by the acts of 1881 and 1887 recognised the co-ownership of the tenant. The tenants had steadily refused to come to an agreement without re-instatement of the evicted, but on the failure of this last effort, the combination gradually fell apart. The worst spate of evictions was in 1890. Many of these tenants were re-admitted, but on payment of two years rent at the old level, with costs land liability for arrears. Father Costello was forced to look at many families in his parish living in miserable huts, and existing on help from outside, until his death in 1901, at an early age like that of his predecessor, Father Coen.

Parnell and the Land Question

Since the winter of 1885/6 the restraint imposed, although backed by the strong argument of imminent Home Rule, had been only partially successful. Resistance to evictions had broken out in many places, notably on the notoriously rack-rented Clanricarde estate in Galway. William O'Brien states that this resistance sprang up 'regardless of the earnest expostulations of the Irish party'. We have seen that Parnell not merely publicly disavowed this movement, but took steps to discipline the National League branches which publicity associated themselves with it. There was naturally an undercurrent of discontent in the league itself. At a meeting of the central branch of the league as early as December 1885, a Mr. Roche of Woodford had raised the question of the Clanricarde evictions, and Matt Harris, a Land League veteran, had confirmed that 'the most dreadful war was being carried on by the landlords against their tenantry all through the west' ...

In May, Davitt spoke to an English sympathizer about the 'great dissatisfaction with the parliamentary party', about their neglect of the land question, and in June Diilon informed the same sympathizer that 'they' (apparently the party) 'had thoroughly made up their minds not to postpone the land question longer than for another six months'.

Following the accustomed pattern, the first phase of the organized land agitation was a parliamentary one. At its first meeting on 4th August 1886, the new party passed a resolution of its intentions to warn the government of the impossibility of paying the judicial rents; this resolution was rightly seen to be the opening of a new land campaign.

Parnell and his Party (1880-1890) - Conor Cruise O'Brien

Parnell in the Shadows

As Parnell had foretold, the situation in Ireland at once began to deteriorate. In the middle of October, John Dillon, speaking at Woodford, which was at the centre of the developing struggle on the Clanricarde estates, advised the tenants to organise themselves, estate by estate, to offer the landlord a proportion of the rent due, and if this was refused, to lodge it with trustees of good repute, who would then use it to pay allowances to those evicted for non-payment of the full rent. A week later his advice was embodied in an article in United Ireland written by Timothy Harrington, the secretary of the Irish National League. this article entitled 'A Plan of Campaign', both set the tone and provided the name for a fresh wave of agitation which now commenced. The basic idea of witholding excess rents, and using the money to provide a fund to protect tenants in case of eviction, was elaborated in detail. Estate-funds, the article suggested, should not be dissipated on legal proceedings, and the National League itself should not only guarantee the tenants against embezzling trustees, but should also undertake to maintain grants to the evicted tenants, after the individual estate funds had been exhausted. Harrington made it clear that boycotting would be brought to bear whenever it was needed: 'That the farms unjustly evicted will be left severely alone, and everybody who aids the victim shunned, is scarcely necessary to say'.

As soon as this article appeared, various members of the Irish party, headed by John Dillon and William O'Brien, began to spread the gospel it preached in different parts of the country. Then on 19th November, the two leaders carried out a much publicised 'collection' of the Clanricarde rents at Portumna. This was a danger signal to which the government quickly reacted by citing Dillon before the court of Queen's Bench to give bail for 'good behaviour' and by 'proclaiming' a meeting in Sligo. But the agitation continued to grow so fast although the Plan of Campaign was officially designated 'an unlawful and criminal conspiracy', by the spring of 1887, most of the 116 estates which were ultimately to be involved in the struggle, were already affected.

For Parnell no less than the government, this sudden resurgence of large-scale unrest posed a serious problem. At first, he gave it out that he was suffering from a gastric complaint and was lying ill under his mother's care. This provoked from F.H. O'Donnell a scurrilous parody of a popular Victorian ballad which, to those who could read between the lines, indicated that O'Donnell at least was not taken in:

> Who is the being sent to guard
> My freedom from a prison ward,
> Perhaps my pate from truncheon hard?
> My Mother!
> Who fondly nursed my gastric pain,
> While Dillon roamed the Connacht Plain
> And Bill and Timmy bawled in vain?

My Mother! (The Fall of Parnell - F.S.L. Lyons). "Dillon" (John), "Bill" (William O'Brien), "Timmy" (Tim Healy).

William Hangman Joyce in East Galway

"Joyce was serving in East Galway at the time of the Phoenix Park affair (May 6, 1882) and a month later, he was caught up in the excitement of a double agrarian crime within a few miles of his station at Ballinasloe. The victims were Walter J. Bourke, J.P., a land owner and Robert Wallace, a corporal in the 1st Royal Dragoons, as they were driving home from Gort in a trap. Bourke's relations with his tenants were exceedingly bad, and he had earned particular notoriety by bringing his rifle with him to Mass, and refusing to leave the church, when asked to do so by the priest.

Clifford Lloyd, though suffering from an attack of gout in the neck, took charge of Galway, and dispached a special officer on June 28 to arrange for the erection of Temporary Police Posts throughout the southern part of the country. The very next day he had to report to the Castle that his reign and been 'sadly bapized'. Lord Clanricarde's aged land agent, John Henry Blake, J.P., and his servant Thady Ruane, driving in the forenoon of an outside car, had been shot dead about a mile from the town of Loughrea. The attackers used the same technique as on the earlier occasion, firing from behind a loopholed road wall. In this, as in the Bourke-Wallace case, evidence was not forthcoming to sustain a change against anyone one. Lloyd was not despondent, however. The murders were 'apparently of the usual type'. Northern Clare four months earlier, was in just as bad a state as Loughrea now was. The erection of posts every three miles, with constant day and night patrolling conducted by officers who understood its art, together with the wholesale arrest of most of the local members of the I.R.B., the society which arranged and ordered these murders, produced the perfect peace, which now reigned in that large and wild district of County Clare, which bordered on the most lawless part of Galway (Loughrea, Gort, etc.).

In 1884, he went with Reed on a special mission to investigate a startling development in the Maamtrasna case. The masscare at Maamtrasna in August 1882 had no political objective, unlike the affair in the Phoenix Parki a few months before. Joyce described his medical history, 'I was predisposed to heriditary gout and rheumatism' he said . . . ' . . . as far back as 1884, I had premonitory symptoms of the violent internal pain from which I suffered so much, and in 1886 I had a very serious attack of it at Woodford, Co. Galway, in investigating a dreadful murder, being obliged to occupy a very damp and unwholesome room, no other being porcurable, as at the time even the corpse of the murdered man was boycotted. (James Finlay ('Balaclava') was shot dead on March 3, 1886, by the Fenian I.R.B. and not as W.S. Blunt stated "by the ordinary decent people of Woodford" (see 'The Land War in Ireland, Pages 67-70). On May 10, 1888, Joyce, with the status of an acting Resident Magistrate, was holding an enquiry in County Galway under Balfour's Crime Act, when he received a letter asking him if he could come to Dublin on a matter 'partly private, but of public importance'.

(Leon Ó Broin — The Prime Informer, A Suppressed Scandal).

Ballinasloe Welcomes English Leaders

Following his conviction at Portumna, Mr. Wilfred Blunt, an English M.P., who had addressed a protest meeting following the cruel campaign of evictions at Woodford in 1886, was transported in a police van towards Ballinasloe, on his way to Galway Gaol.

Arrangements for a huge demonstration in his honour at Ballinasloe were foiled through a ruse by police escort. Instead of continuing onto Ballinasloe Railway Station, as stated in advance, they turned off the main road and eventually boarded the train at Woodlawn. A member of the British House of Commons, the Right Hon. G. Shaw Lefevre, who had crossed from London to be present at the trial of Mr. Blunt, his friend and fellow sympathiser in the cause of Lord Clanricarde's oppressed tenants, promised after the trial to receive an address at Ballinasloe, and in his reply to speak upon the results of the trial. On his arrival at Ballinasloe, Mr. Lefevre was met by his Lordship, Most Rev. Dr. Duggan, Bishop of Clonfert. The town was in a state of excitement; a vast concourse of people filled the hall where a meeting was to be held, and overflowed into the adjoining streets. It was proposed to form a procession of carriages, preceded by the town band, but Mr. Lefevre declined the demonstration as inappropriate to the day his friend, Mr. Blunt, was conveyed to prison. As he was walking down towards the hall accompanied by the Bishop, they found a large force of police near the hall, and the senior police officer assumed a most menacing attitude towards them. In an overbearing and insolent manner, he informed them that he had strict instructions to prevent any disturbance, and complained that already stones had been thrown at a number of his men. This was positively denied by many bystanders.

When Mr. Lefevre suggested that the best course, in order to avoid any disturbance, would be for the officer to withdraw his force of police to the barracks, he vehemently rejected the suggestion. His Lordship the Bishop, seeing that it was the obvious intention of the officer to bring about a conflict with the people congregated there, advised Mr. Lefevre not to receive the address in the hall. Mr. Lefevre acted on that advice and retired to his hotel followed by cheering crowds.

Very Rev. Fr. Costello, Parish Priest, of Ballinasloe, speaking from the Hotel window, informed the people that in order to avoid the conflict, which the police so obviously wished to provoke, His Lordship the Bishop desired them all to disperse as soon as possible. Showing how completely they respected their Bishop, the people acted at once on his suggestion, and in a few minutes the streets were cleared.

Mr. Lefevre then received a deputation of 30 or 40 of the leading men in Ballinasloe, who presented him with an address. In reply, Mr. Lefevre defended Mr. Blunt's action in endeavouring to hold the meeting at Woodford for which he had been sent to jail that day. He pointed out that the effect of the conviction of Mr. Blunt, was that the right of public meeting was completely at the mercy of the Government and the police.

Before receiving the address, Mr. Lefevre had been earnestly entreated by His Lordship the Bishop, to be moderate in his language so as not to shut the door against a settlement between Lord Clanricarde and the tenants of his

estate in East Galway. Acting on this advice, he brought the meeting to a close and after bidding farewell to the Bishop, returned to Dublin by the night train and thence to England.

From -
THE CLANRICARDE REIGN OF TERROR IN EAST-GALWAY
By: - J.B. Donohue, The Connacht Tribune (13/4/1957)

George John Shaw-Lefevre 1831 - 1928

by P.K. Egan

Among those Englishmen who took a genuine and sympathetic interest in the plight of the Irish tenant in the eighteen-eighties, George John Shaw-Lefevre stands out as one who was prepared to champion his cause in Ireland, in the English parliament and before the British public. He came of a family which had given distinguished service across the water. His uncle, Charles Shaw-Lefevre, later Viscount Eversley, had been speaker of the House of Commons,

Martin Egan

the best man, according to Lord Palmerstown, who ever filled the chair. He had held many prestigious offices, such as Presidency of the Royal Agricultural Society, Trusteeship of the British Museum as well as membership of various commissions. His father, John George Shaw-Lefevre, as clerk of parliament, was acquainted with most of the public men of the day and the son was brought up in a political atmosphere. From being a Whig, he became liberal and even radical. He was Liberal M.P. for Reading in 1883-1885. Defeated in that year, he was disappointed in not being a member of Gladtsone's Home Rule cabinet, being a strong supporter of Home Rule for Ireland. But returned again in 1886, he retained his seat until 1895, and was a member of the cabinets of Gladstone and Lord Roseberry. Defeated in that year, he decided not to run again for parliament. In 1906 he was raised to the peerage as Lord Eversley at the instance of Campbell Bannerman.

In a number of visits in the eighteen-eighties, he made himself thoroughly familiar with all that was happening about Woodford, Portumna and Loughrea, and he was actually instrumental in bringing the dispute on Sir Henry Burke's property at Marble Hill to an end, in a settlement which included reinstatement of the evicted tenants. The events of those years are described by him in two books, **Incidents of Coercion in Ireland,** published in 1888, and **Combination and Coercion,** published in 1890. Together they give an authentic eyewitness account of the land agitation in South East Galway, landlord reaction and the attitude of the Castle Administration. With great truth he said, "It is all important to recollect that the Plan of Campaign was in the Clanricarde case, as in many others, the last resort of a people driven to despair, who could expect nothing from their landlord, and against whom all the forces of the state were being used to enforce evictions which public opinion of the country unanimously condemned'.

Galway Gaol — Two Views

" ... Voltaire, when arrested by **lettre de cachet** one hundred and sixty years ago, made instant demand for three things of the Governor of the Bastille, a change of his own linen, fresh milk, and writing materials and all three were granted to him. But in our gaols no such requests are listened to, and the least criminal of men is placed on the same level of treatment with the most brutal wife-beater and the lowest pickpocket. All alike are garbed in coarse frieze clothing, heavy hobnailed shoes and a round felt cap; all sleep on a bare plank bed at night, and all are intellectually starved, being kept without food for the mind in the way of book or other mental occupation. To me this last deprivation was the most severe ... Galway Gaol as I remember it, was a roomy old-fashioned place, built, I should imagine, about a hundred years ago - at any rate before the time of scientific prison planning - and as such not without its attraction to an imaginative mind. It had the appropriate prison gloom outside the walls, but within possessed the advantage of irregularity in its construction - a rambling building with corridors not all of a piece, and cells of various sizes ... As long as daylighted lasted I was happy, but the night soon became to me a torment all but intolerable. The plank bed is a real instrument of torture for anyone not

inured to hard lying, and not worn out with physical hard work. Often on my Eastern travels I had slept soundly on the naked ground, but it was at the end of a long day's camel ride, and when the nights were warm and comparatively short. But these long January nights in Galway Gaol with their thirteen hours of unlighted darkness, insufficiently clothed and covered, were beyond patient endurance..." **Wilfred S. Blunt - "The Land War in Ireland"** *(London, Herbert & Daniel) 1912.*

"... The County Gaol ... a truly superb structure on Nun's Island ... One is pleased with the arrangements and cleanliness of this extensive prison, which for salubrity of situation* and convenience rivals any prison in the Empire, and as such may be truly termed a national institution ... Their beds are comfortable; they are of metal and hung on swivels ... what a happy change has taken place!" **Hely Dutton - A Statistical and Agricultural Survey of the County of Galway with Observations on the Means of Improvement.** Dublin *(Printed at the University Press by R. Graisberry Printer to the Royal Dublin Society) 1824.*

* Galway Cathedral has since been built on the site of the old gaol. Ed.

Galway Jail and Homecoming

Letter of Pat Keary

Woodford 8th. Jan. 1888

My dear Fanny,

although I am at home since Monday night, I have not spent one hour in the house since, except while I was in bed, because of having to appear everyday during Mr. Blunt's trial in Portumna. The girls tell me that one of them wrote to tell you of my arrival. You will be surprised to hear that notwithstanding my months confinement, I have not been in better health for the last seven years than I am in at present. Nobody knows how much hardship they can endure until they are compelled to go through with it, whether they like it or not. Of course I felt the bread and water, and the plank bed for the first few days very keenly, though I never pretended to it, but I never for one moment lost my courage or cheerfulness, and those are the two great ingredients to pull a fellow through in prison life; besides, I felt the proud consciousness that the crime for which I was being punished, was such as need never bring the blush of shame to my children's face, nor a pang of remose to my own heart.

I spent Xmas Day dancing a polka about the cell and singing every old sing I had learned thirty years ago, so that I shamed and surprised all the young fellows within hearing distance of me, into imitating my example. In the midst of all this outward gaiety, I need not tell you that I cast an odd stray thought to the loved one whom God took from me nearly four years ago; and whom from her own bright home "beyond the skies" had that morning joined her prayers there with mine at God's altar in the jail, that He might keep our dear ones in Woodford in His grace and love and friendship. But this was only a passing thought, and I did not allow it to interfere long with my Xmas amusements in the cell. I

had hopes that everything was going on alright at home, and I well knew that they would all be doing their best and keep the business attended to.

Raymond came to meet me in Galway, and his face was the first I saw on my entrance to the outside world, after leaving the prison gate. Father Willy (Roche) was with him and my journey from that home was one continued ovation. At Athenry and Loughrea cheers for Patrick Keary and Woodford were heard everywhere, and there was not a house on the side of the road from Loughrea to Woodford that had not a candle in every pane, with bonfires music and torches at every cross roads. But the entry into Woodford was something awful. Crowds came out with the band, the town was illuminated, and then they all stopped outside the house I had to go to, that now historic window of the parlour upstairs and I made a **flaming** speech.

The pleasure of finding all the chldren so well at home, and the sincerely warm greeting of all my old friends, made me feel as buoyant and gay as any young fellow in the crowd.

Everyone else here is as gay as a lark. The children are all in blooming good health. They all with Mrs. Roche join me in sending yourself and Patrick our most affectionate New Years Greetings.

I am my dear Fanny, Your affectionate brother Pat Keary

(From Michael Keary, Aughrim, Ballinasloe).

Main Street, Woodford, at the turn of the Century.

Roche and Egan in Galway Jail

by Desmond Roche

Perhaps the most interesting document to emerge from this episode, s the account written in Galway Gaol by Martin M. Egan of his arrest and journey to Galway in company with John Roche! This was obtained from the Egan family papers in possession of Dr. Kevin Egan P.P. Portumna.

Egan deliberately sought imprisonment, giving himself up to a sergeant of police at Woodford for an earlier land war offence, and was remanded in custody by a magistrate for eight days. He set out with Roche on 27 October 1887, in a covered car, escorted by forty constables led by a District Inspector. As they left Woodford, Blunt came to the carriage window to wish them farewell and give encougagement. Egan magnanimously made light of his own remand sentence, but observed that John Roche looked the picture of courage and determination, though conscious, as he must have been, of his bodily weakness and the severe trial his strength would be put to.

They were driven to Ballinasloe station, reaching it at about 7 p.m. and bundled onto the train without refreshments although they had been travelling without pause since early morning. There were large demonstrations of support at Ballinasloe and at intermediate stations, including very welcome refreshments at Athenry, with musical accompaniment from the Town Band. At Galway, the crowds were so enthusiastic that the prisoners were handcuffed together, and suffered painfully from both friend and enemy. They reached the gaol eventually and were in their cells, stretched on their plank beds by about 10 p.m.

Martin Egan, as an untried prisoner, was entitled to relatively mild fare and treatment, although neither was in any way palatable or pleasant. But Roche, already sentenced, got far worse of both, and Egan records faithfully what his friend had to endure. During his first three days, breakfast was 8 oz. of prison bread, accompanied only by water. Dinner consisted of stirabout made of 3 oz. of Indian meal and 3 oz. oatmeal, while supper was a repetition of breakfast - a half pound of dry bread. Things improved slightly from the fourth day onwards: breakfast was 5 oz. bread, with one pint of cocoa and ¾ pint of milk. Dinner became less monotonous: on Sunday and Thursdays, 5 oz. bread followed by 6 oz. suet pudding, washed down with ¾ pint milk. On Wednesdays and Fridays prisoners dined on 3 oz. bread 8 oz. potatoes and ¾ pint milk. On Mondays, Tuesdays and Saturdays there was 13 oz. bread and hlaf pint of soup. Supper was invariably 5 oz. bread with a pint of cocoa and half a pint of milk. Egan reported that the bread was 'very good', made of wholemeal and, he thought, barm, but the cocoa was revolting, unrecognisable as cocoa, and undrinkable.

Egan and Roche met during their first morning in prison, on the occasion of their medical inspection by the prison doctor. Roche was in prison garb. They could not speak, but Egan did what he could in the way of silent encouragement to help Roche through his ordeal. They saw each other at Mass on the following Sunday, and again on the Feast of All Saints. Roche's appearance on the Sunday seemed to show evidence of suffering under the hardship which he had to

undergo, but he had recovered somewhat by Tuesday. Egan's documentary ends at this point. It contributes a wonderful record of unselfishness and loyalty to a friend in a dark hour.

Diary of Martin Egan's arrest in Woodford and journey to Galway jail via Ballinasloe and Athenry with John Roche M.P. and their prison life together.

"Remember Woodford — and Wilfrid"

by M. Shiel

In 1886 there appeared in East Galway an English gentleman from the upper classes who, unusually for a man of his background, appeared to understand the tenants' plight and who, still more unusually, was prepared to do something about it.

Wilfrid Scawen Blunt born 17th August 1840 had friends and relations among the most powerful of the English ruling classes. He was accepted as a poet and writer of considerable ability. He had the facility of getting involved in many different causes - independence for Egypt and India, the promotion of Islam and of course the reformation of the landlord system in Ireland. He travelled extensively through North Africa and Arabia in the company of his wife Anne who was a grand daughter of the poet Byron and with her help founded the world-famous Arabian horse stud at Crabbet, his family seat in Sussex. He was a man of passion who entered into everything he took up, whether it was the freedom of a nation or one of his many love affairs, with a fervid intensity.

He was throughout his life a convinced Home Ruler, and endevoured through his upper-class contacts to influence the English government in this direction. He was a friend of Gladstone, Lord Randolph Churchill (and later of

Lawrences', Woodford, 1886.

his son, Winston), Cardinal Manning, Lady Gregory and of very many Irish landlords. In his early years he served in the diplomatic service with Hubert de Burgh, later to become Lord Clanricarde. In fact he was a rival of de Burgh for the favours of a certain Catherine Walters, known best in British upper-class society as 'Skittles'. (Blunt succeeded where de Burgh failed). Lady Longford, in her biography of Blunt, "A Pilgrimage of Passion"*, quotes from the Blunt Papers: "He (de Burgh) used to come 'sneaking' outside the house at night, so that the then Prince of Wales and Lord Hartington were forced to empty a **pot de chambre** on his head". Later he frequently met Clanricarde at the Travellers Club and thought that his penurious habits and certain oddities about him made him an uncomfortable acquaintance.

When Blunt's cousin George Wyndham was appointed Irish Chief Secretary in 1903, he requested Blunt to act as go-between in the Irish agrarian problem i.e. between Wyndham and John Redmond, head of the Irish Parliamentary Party following the death of Parnell. Blunt played a key role in the negotiations which led up to the Wyndham Land Act of 1903, which in effect terminated the Land War and had by 1908 enabled about a quarter of a million Irish tenants to buy out their own farms.

Even in his declining years Blunt continued to champion the Irish cause for Home Rule. He was a staunch defender of Sir Roger Casement both as to the allegations regarding his private morality in his earlier life and in his trial for 'treason'. He contributed at least £1,000 for Casement's defence. He approved in principle of the 1916 Rebellion. In one of his letters to John Dillon he said: 'without occasional incidents of physical revolt a national cause stagnates and gets lost in the slough of material apathy and increased well-being'.

Blunt was a Catholic from birth but his life was tormented by doubts and the difficulty in reconciling the Church's teaching with his own amorous life-style. However, when he died on 10th. September 1922, he had been reconciled to the Church and had in attenance during his last days an Irish Dominican, Fr. Vincent McNabb for whom he had great respect.

Despite his full life and multitudinous interests, it is for his fight for the Irish tenantry that he will be best remembered in Ireland. He first became aware of the plight of the tenants on a visit to his friend, Lord Kenmare, at Killarney in 1874. It was not however until 1886 that he became really involved. A number of visits to Ireland in that year convinced him that his London society clubmates were tyrants to their unfortunate Irish tenants - Lord Kenmare in Kerry, Lord Kingston and Colonel King-Harman in Roscommon, Lord Arran in Donegal and his former colleague Lord Clanricarde in Co. Galway.

Evictions were rife and he attended many. He recalls in his book "The Land War in Ireland": 'The sight made me so angry I was positively ill, my heart hurting me'. He had become a great friend of Michael Davitt and ranged far and wide throughout Ireland following up various phases of the agrarian campaign. This article however must of necessity confine itself to his activities in East Galway.

He made many visits to Dr. Duggan, Bishop of Clonfert at Loughrea '... the most wonderful and enchanting old man I have seen for many years ... lives in a poor little house in the town - they call it the Palace - waited on by one old peasant woman and a little foundling boy ...' He visited Woodford in the com-

The Mill House, Woodford, residence of John Roche, M.P.

pany of Mr. John Sweeny of Loughrea shortly after the murder of the process-server, Finlay. Here he met John Roche and Patrick Keary, two of the local leaders of the agitation. On his return to England in June 1886 he set about putting the tenants' case to the parliamentarians, but Gladstone's Home Rule Bill was occupying all attention. It was defeated by a majority of thirty.

At his home Crabbet, Sussex at the end of July 1887 he discussed the Plan of Campaign with John Dillon and promised to help in any way he could. Three weeks later the Irish National League was banned. On 14th October Dillon took Blunt at his word and summoned him by telegram to Dublin. From there he went immediately to Limerick. There were to be anti-eviction meetings in the 'proclaimed' areas and Blunt's presence might help. Blunt, William O'Brien M.P., a visiting English M.P. James Rowlands and two pressmen first attended evictions at Bodyke and a small meeting at Tuamgraney in Co. Clare. This was to put the police off the scent as their real destination was the proclaimed meeting of the 16th October at Woodford. Arriving about midnight with the authorities hopefully thrown off the scent and the telegraph wires cut, there was no large police presence. A huge crowd gathered immediately around P. Keary's house, the second storey windows of which had been removed. The whole scene was lit up by torches and turf sods soaked in paraffin oil and stuck on the ends of hayforks. O'Brien stood in one of the open windows and in the course of a fiery speech symbolically burned the government Proclamation against all meetings in the area. Blunt and Rowlands followed with speeches. For Blunt this was the watershed between keeping within and breaking the law and was to weigh against him in his subsequent trial.

On 21st October, Blunt, who was back in Dublin, heard that evictions were once more taking place at Woodford, where a girl's head had been broken in an affray with the police. His reaction was to decide to return to Woodford and hold, not a secret meeting, but a public one. He also decided that there would be no Irishmen on the platform - only Englishmen, thus obtaining the maximum publicity and placing the authorites in a quandry. John Roche arranged for handbills to be printed in Loughrea announcing the meeting for 2 o'clock on Sunday 23rd and mentioning that Blunt would be a speaker. As expected, the meeting was promptly 'proclaimed'. It was arranged however that it would be held in P. Keary's 'Church Meadow', which, while adjacent to the street, was on private property, so that accusations of obstructing the public highway could not be made.

Blunt spent the Saturday night in Roche's Mill House and next morning a scouting expedition by Roche's children brought the news, that during the night the village had been occupied by 150 extra police and a company of the Scots Guards. He promptly sent a letter to the officers commanding both units, challenging the legality of proclaiming a meeting convened by 'orderly Englishmen loyal subjects of Her Majesty for an orderly and loyal purpose'. This proved to be of no avail. Immediately Blunt had mounted the platform and uttered the words, 'Men of Galway ...' he was immediately arrested by Inspector Byrne, Divisional Magistrate in charge of the police.

As the party was leaving the field, en route for the courthouse, stones were thrown at the police and a baton charge was made. P. Keary was knocked on the head and John Roche, who had defended himself with a blackthorn stick, was also arrested. After a short hearing Blunt and Roche were remanded in custody to Loughrea Gaol. The journey, made in the brougham of Inspector Byrne, was punctuated by greetings and bonfires at every village and crossroads on the way. Blunt recalled that he was so exhausted by the events of the day that he slept as soundly in an eight-foot by six-foot cell as if he were at home. He was happy in the thought that from one point of view his experience deserved to be remembered in Irish history, as being the first recorded instance, in all the four hundred years of English oppression, of an Englishman having taken the Celtic Irish side in any conflict, or suffered even the shortest imprisonment for Ireland's sake.

Next day, back at Woodford, he was sentenced to two months' imprisonment by two 'removable magistrates', neither of them possessed of any legal knowledge.

He appealed and was released on bail. The appeal was heard at Portumna. Blunt's defence was conducted by The MacDermot and Tim Harrington. Counsel for the prosecution were John Atkinson, and Edward Carson as junior. However, the sentence was confirmed by Mr. Justice Henn, a friend of Lord Clanricarde, and Blunt was conveyed promptly to Galway Gaol to serve his sentence.

However, it was victory of a sort. The intense publicity attending the trial had its effect on English opinion. The headline in the 'Pall Mall Gazette' was, 'Remember Woodford - and Wilfrid'.

* *Published by Weidenfeld and Nicholson, London 1979.*

Committee of the Woodford Tenants' Defence Association

'With reference to the photograph of the committee of the Woodford Tenants' Defence Association in which I and 'Dr'. Tully appear, we were holding our usual meeting one Sunday in the rooms of the organisation, and a friend who was a photographer being at Woodford - a very rare occurrence in the village - he asked permission to take a photograph of the members of the committee which was granted'. (Parnellism and Crime, Evidence of Rev. Pat Egan).

Photograph taken in 1887

Seated (L to R): Rev. P. Egan, C.C., John Roche, Rev. P. Coen, P.P. Standing (L to R): 'Dr' Tully (bottle), Laurence Egan, Stanny Burke (beard), Pat Keary (watch chain), Malachy Donnelly (hat and moustache), Tom O'Donnell (moustache), Tim Clarke, (beard), Michael Shiel (hat & moutache), John Reilly (beard). Other active members included M. Egan P.L.G., P. McDermott, F.F. O'Donnell, F. O'Farrell, P. O'Reilly, J. Egan.

My Native Place

Mary L. Flannery

I

I'll sing a song of my native place, in the midst of Slieve Aughty's hills;
The woodlands green and its mountains grand, and its murmuring streams and rills.
The lordly Shannon flowing on, through valleys green and wide,
It gives its name to a parish fair, known as 'the Shannon side'.

II

Old Woodford Town in the valley lies, among the woodlands green,
And peace and plenty reigns around, and kindly people seen.
How oft I've stood upon the bridge, at the entrance of the town,
And watched the rippling water flow, from Loughatorick down.

III

It ripples thro' the meadows green, by wood and road and bower,
Along its banks the small birds sing, among each scented flower.
Along by Looscaun Church it flows, all through the pastures wide,
By farms and cot in the pretty spot, that is known as 'the Shannon side'.

IV

Oh, Woodford is a pretty place, its men were famed of old,
In spite of cruel tyrants laws, they fought their land to hold,
'Tis famed today for Churchmen true, and many a saintly Nun,
Who spent their lives for God above, the coloured race among.

Memories

Mary L. Flannery

One lovely day in the month of May, to view the scenes around,
I took a walk over hill and brae, to a place called Woodford Town.
To see again each hill and glen, and the lordly Shannon River,
And now to note each wood and moat, I surely must endeavour.

I stood upon the little bridge, that spans the rippling stream,
That flows from Loughatorick Lake, with sunshine all agleam.
I see the little town once more, beside the woods so green,
And thoughts of Roche's busy mill, alas! no longer seen.

I saw St. John's, our little Church, it stands on steep Bark Hill,
The Convent grand, in its plot of land, how well I love them still.
The Curate's house and schools are nigh, where Sisters' guide the young,
As I walked that way, I thought of the day, when I was one among.

I see "God's Acre" where at rest, are all the ones we love,
Awaiting there the Trumpet call, to sound from Heaven above.
For all will rise when comes that call, no matter how unknown.
And I call to mind a line I read - "In Heaven we'll know our own".

I think of those once firm and strong, that long have passed away,
Their homes and lands in stranger's hands, alas! to see the day.
But never will their memory die, for those who crossed their door,
They now in Heaven reward have won, and could we wish them more?

I take my way to old Ben Hill, where a wonderous view is seen,
The hills and valleys stretch along, and woodlands ever green.
Then home I hie to my little cot, and there I sit me down,
To dream and sigh for days gone by, in dear old Woodford Town.

The Burkes of Marble Hill

Thomas Gorman

The Burkes of Marble Hill are first recorded - Thomas Burke McJonack and Richard McEdmund Burke - as small landowners at Creigín mór and Boirtín na gceapóg (as the property was then named) in 1617. They appear to have succeeded in remaining on as occupiers, in spite of the Cromwellian confiscations, probably as tenants and under the protection of the Masons of Masonbrook. The head of the family in 1689, Thomas McJonack Burke, was killed fighting for King James in the Williamite wars, but again the family apparently succeeded, in spite of forfeiture, in occupation as tenants of the Masons.

The grandson of Thomas McJonack Burke, John Burke of Grallagh, farmed extensively, and owing to the high price of meat and provisions during the American War of Independence in the 1770/80s, succeeded in accumulating a large fortune. He built a mansion about 1775, and gave the property its new name of Marble Hill.

According to popular legend, however, the first ancestor of the Burkes of Marble Hill was a carter, and the origin of the family fortunes were the barrels of gold coins, which he had managed to steal from a fairy fort in Grallagh.

John's son, Thomas, who succeeded him in 1793, was a strong supporter of the Dublin Castle government in a period of much unrest, and was soon appointed a magistrate, a post for which Catholics had become eligible under the Catholic Relief Act of 1793. Among the services rendered by Thomas Burke, was the support he gave to the brother of the then Earl of Clanrickarde, who had raised a regiment in 1793 to participate in the war which broke out in that year between England and Revolutionary France. The regiment was known as the Connaught Rangers, later acquiring in the British Army the nickname of "The Devil's Own". An echo of its connection with the locality came much later in March 1886, when James Finlay, process-server to the Burkes of Marble Hill and the Lewises of Ballinagar, was murdered outside Woodford, on the eve of threatened evictions. James Finlay bore the nickname

"Balaclava" for having served with the Connaught Rangers in the Crimean War.

Thomas Burke, like his father, was an "improving", or what would now be called a progressive landlord. He won bounties from the Royal Dublin Society for the planting of trees; he fostered the reclaiming of mountain land in Slieve Aughty through manuring with marl, and he used cinders from the closed-down ironworks in Woodford for the making of roads on his estates.

Another example of his initiative was his response to the explusion of Catholic tenants from their lands in South Ulster, due to the outrages committed in the 1790's by the recently established Orange Order. He is said to have, by newspaper advertisements and posters, offered the refugees land in Co. Galway at 2/6 and 5/- an acre. The Ulstermen who came to Woodford, mainly it would seem from Co. Monaghan, having completed the long journey with stock and household goods, are reported to have been considerably taken aback at their first sight of the barren mountain wastes offered to them, whose low rents needed no further explanation. Nevertheless contingents from the North continued to arrive over the next 50 years, although the influx did not increase the Burkes' popularity with their home-grown tenants. *(See Seamus MacEneny's article "The Ultachs).*

Thomas Burke's services to the Government were further recognised in 1797, when he was made Sir Thomas Burke, Baronet. In the same year his daughter, Elizabeth married in Marble Hill House, the 13th Earl of Clanricarde, becoming in due course grandmother to the notorious 2nd Marquess and last of his line, who did so much to bring Irish landlordism into disrepute.

Another daughter married Sir Henry Joseph Tichborne of Hampshire, England, and the family round which in Victorian times, the notorious case of the Tichborne Claimant revolved. A third daughter married Viscount Strangford, British Ambassador to Russia.

Sir Thomas Burke died in 1813 and was succeeded by his son, Sir John, who inherited the businesslike qualities of his forbears, and greatly increased his estate by acquiring the estates of other landlords who had become bankrupt. Many travellers and distinguished personages of the day enjoyed the renowned hospitality of Marble Hill. After Catholic Emancipation, Sir John, in a closely contested election, defeated James Daly of Dunsandle, a Tory, and sat as M.P. for Co. Galway 1830-32.

An interesting sidelight on the times is given by the note in the Irish Catholic Directory - 26 March 1837 - "Miss Burke of Marble Hill, daughter of Sr. J. Burke, Bart., renounced Protestantism, at the Catholic Chapel, Loughrea, and was received by the Rt. Rev. Dr. Coen into the bosom of the Catholic Church". Although the Burkes were Catholics, it was a regular practice at the time that the sons were brought up in the religion of the fathers, and the daughters in that of the mothers. Local tradition had much to say about changes in religious allegiance in the Marble Hill family, which always had the result, so the account went, that the head of the house remained a Catholic.

Sir John died in 1847 and was succeeded by his eldest son, Sir Thomas John Burke, 3rd Baronet. But here the family talent for business and for estate management seems to have run out. The third Baronet was a handsome and extremely popular figure, and although he was an MP from 1847 to 1865, his

chief claim to fame was his devotion to sport. He is said to have maintained at one time a stable of 11 horses, and the Marble Hill Stakes, still run at the Curragh, keep his memory green, and the Marble Hill of other days. He married the neighbouring Lady Mary Nugent, daughter of Anthony, third Earl of Westmeath, who had succeeded the Burkes of Pallas, Tynagh, with Cromwell's campaign.

Relations with his tenants were not enhanced by the fact that in the famous Nolan-Trench election for MP for Co. Galway in 1872, he took the side of the gentry and their candidate, Trench against Nolan, who was backed by people and clergy.

Sir Thomas died in 1875, and was succeeded by his eldest son, John Charles, who died unmarried in 1880. The second son, Henry George, succeeded at a time of crisis for Irish landlordism. Before he died, unmarried, in 1910, the battle had been won and lost, and the glories of Marble Hill had departed. A third brother, Thomas Malachy, inherited for just three years, and his son, Gerald Howe, was to see the severing of the family link, after the mansion was burnt down during "the troubles", and the subsequent take-over of the demesne by the Forestry Department.

The family now lives in London, the 8th Baronet, Sir Thomas Stanley Burke having succeeded to the title after the death of his father in 1954.

Eviction Scenes at Woodford

Ballinasloe Weekly Examiner

The little town was the scene of unusual bustle and excitement on Friday last, consequent on the arrival of a large eviction party in the shape of 150 police accompanied by Mr. Smyth, R.M., County Inspector O'Brien, Ballinasloe and District Inspectors Davis of Loughrea and Wade of Portumna with the sheriff, a representative, Mr. O'Shaughnessy and the usual ill-looking pair who do the dirty work on such occasions. The property of Sir Henry Burke of Marblehill was that selected for the operations, and accompanied by his baliff, Anthony Carroll, the work began. As soon as the big lines of cars laden with policemen began to arrive, the chapel bells were tolled, also horsemen rode in all directions blowing horns through the surrounding districts. In an exceedingly short space of time a large crowd of people assembled and by the time the evicting party were in marching order, over a thousand persons were present. The first house visited by the sheriff was that of Mr. Stephen Walsh, one of the largest traders in the town. The shop door was strongly barred and admittance being refused, the crowbar brigade began to batter it in with stones amid the groans of the people, Mrs. Walsh and her family all the time waving handkerchiefs from the drawing-room windows above the shop. When at last the door gave way the bailiffs entered and began to clean out the shop, taking the large quantity of drapery and other goods outside the door. Fr. Egan, Mr. John Roche and Mr. Pat Keary and other members of the committee of the Tenants Defence Association, then entered the house. At their request Mr. Walsh handed the sheriff the full amount of rent being for one year to 1st November last, including the running half-gale and £4.4s. costs, at the same time protesting against the illegality of the sheriff's proceedings. Loud cheers for Mr. Walsh and his family were given as soon as the bailiffs cleared out of the house.

The whole force then proceeded to the residence of Mr. Francis O'Farrell of Allendara, a distance of about a mile and a half from the town and by the time the place was reached there could not be less than five thousand persons present. All along the road the groaning and cheering was incessant. (Cont. in "the Ultachs).

Mr. O'Farrell offered to pay the full amount of rent claimed if he got a reduction of five shillings in the pound, but that he would pay not costs. The sheriff having stated that he had no power to make such terms, the work of demolition commenced. for over an hour the bailiffs kept striking at the door with large stones, the crowd shouting, booing the whole time and every moment becoming more and more excited. The police were drawn up in front of the house and were vigourous in their efforts in keeping the people back. Father Coen, P.P. and Father Egan with Mr. John Roche and Mr. Pat Keary kept continually moving the people and entreating them not to commit a breach of the peace. The door at last having given away buckets of boiling water were poured from the inside which made those in the immediate neighbourhood of the door pause in their work for a while. Father Egan at length made his way to one of the windows and addressing those inside beseeched them not to put themselves in the power of the Law. When at length the sheriff got admission the bailiffs commenced clearing out the furniture, and as each article was removed the shouting and groaning was deafening. The furniture of the kitchen being cleared out, Mrs. O'Farrell would not allow any hands but her own to touch the little altar erected in her bedroom. The shrine was carefully removed and on its appearance outside the people became furious. Father Coen, who up to this remained quite cool and calm could not restrain his feelings and at sight of the pretty little altar and its religious belongings he wept like a child. I never in all my life witnessed a moment of such intense excitement. The indigation of the people baffles all description. With the tears rolling down his cheeks Fr. Coen continued begging and beseeching the people not to commit any act of violence and telling them that the day was not far distant when such scenes would be impossible and that Mr. Francis O'Farrell by his action on that day was doing as much to hasten the destruction of that system which has ever been the fruitful source of the misery of our poor country.

It is but right to mention that Mr. O'Farrell was in a position to pay twenty times the amount of the claim made on him, but in the interest of his poorer neighbours he refused to pay, because the resolution came to by the tenants of this portion of the Marble Hill property, that of refusing to pay until they got a reduction of five shillings in the pound on the rent due at November, when it is considered that the land upon which Mr. O'Farrell and his neighbours live was once a barren mountain with nothing but rocks and heath, for which no man could or would expect a rent, and that every bit of reclamation done on them, every house built, every drain sunk, every fence erected, every road made, was done without one shilling of expenditure on the part of the landlord. As soon as the reclamation was made, the rent was put on, and the valuation made and rent and rates paid ever since upon all those improvements effected by the tenants themselves. No wonder then that such tenants as these should in such a

year as this ask their landlords to share with them some of their losses, and give them for the first time in their lives a reduction of their rents so as to assist them in tiding over this trying year. But, no, the 'pound of flesh' must be demanded, the 'death sentence' must be put into execution and after three generations of toil and labour, the men who reclaimed those barren tracts and whose fathers and grandfathers removed the rocks and the heath, and made their little holdings look like so many oases in the desert, must now, at the bidding of the lord of the soil, leave the homes of their childhood and of their affections in order to vindicate the offended majesty of an unjust and tyrannical law ...'

As soon as the work of destruction was finished at Mr. O'Farrell's the legalised gang of housebreakers proceeded to the residence of Mr. John McCabe to perform a similar task. Here there was evidence of a determination to give a somewhat stiffer resistance than was offered at Mr. O'Farrell's. A body of fine strapping fine young fellows, armed with hatchets, pitch-forks, and other weapons, took possession of the house and securely barricaded the door from the inside. Father Egan, with usual efficiency arrived at the house before the sheriff, and fearing that the young men inside would commit any rash or imprudent deed went to the window and implored of those within not to do anything that would bring them within the power of the law. But the feelings of the people had now reached such a pitch of excitement that those who had all day exerted themselves in keeping the peace began to despair of being able to do so any longer.

When the sheriff made the usual demand for possession, John McCabe who stood outside his own door boldly told him that he was prepared to pay his rent if he got a reduction of five shillings in the pound but that he would pay no costs. This offer being refused the sheriff asked the bailiff what was he going to do. The poor bailiff who looked the very picture of despair was pale as death and actually quivering with fear refused to any longer take part in such scenes or assist in turning out any young family on such an inclement day. The poor fellow's christian feelings got the better of him and when Mr. Roche slapped him on the back and turned to the crowd and declared that Anthony Carroll refused to carry out any further evictions the people rushed through the ranks of the police and he who was the object of scorn only a few minutes before became all at once the hero of the day, and was conveyed in triumph across the fields in the wildest exultations. His sudden revulsion of feeling took everyone by surprise and the cheering continued loud and long, until the poor Carroll became almost exhausted from the painful but flattering position he occupied on the shoulders of the people. And this ended the days proceedings as far as the officers of the law were concerned., while the work of the people was apparently about to commence. Sites for huts were traced out at once and instructions given for the work of the following Monday. The people formed into a line of 4 deep, and marched into the town with the police in front of them and brass band of Woodford Temperance Society immediately in rear of the police and in front of the people. The procession occupied one and a half miles in length cheering most vociferously the whole way.

According to an announcement by placard the erection of huts was proceeded with on Monday. So large, so enthusiastic, and so orderly a demonstration was never before witnessed in this part of the County Galway. From an

early hour in the morning contingents began to arrive from all sides of the country. I has been estimated that not less than ten thousand persons were present. From Feakle, Co. Clare, came a procession of over a thousand men, preceeded by about 60 dashing fine young fellows on horse-back and followed by a well trained band with three splendid banners, other large contingents with their bands and banners came from Scariff, Whitegate, Mountshannon, Tynagh, Portumna, Killimor, Duniry, Ballinakill, Derrybrien, Kileen, Lietrim, Loughrea and several other places. From each district named came several horses and cars laden with straw, scollops etc. etc.

Carpenters and masons went to work at once, and in a few hours ten huts were erected, which the local committee intended to have comfortably finished and furnished in a few days.

In the evening every window in the town was brilliantly illuminated and a torch light procession was organised to convey the different contingencies from the outlying districts outside the town. Not a single unpleasant incident marked the days proceedings, nor was even one disorderly act or word heard or committed throughout the entire day. The sheriff is daily expected to resume his loathsome work, and extensive preparations are being made to give himself and the bailiff a right warm reception.

Extracts from 'The Western News and Weekly Examiner, Ballinasloe, Saturday February 13 1886 Contributed by S. McEneaney.

From 'Woodford "Reminiscences"'

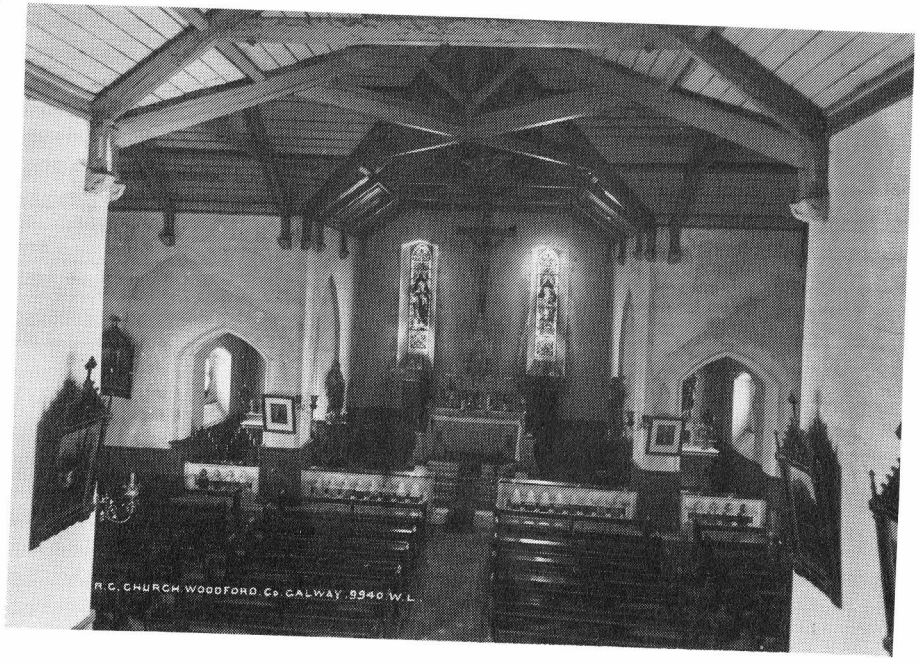
by Rev. Francis O'Farrell P.P. Kalispell, Montana, U.S.A.

'...I remember reading of another scene while away at school in 1886. It was the only eviction fight among the homes of Allendarra. Woodford's landlord was on the warpath. Down the street of the little town marched the 'Crow-bar brigade' to the turn of the old mountain road. 'Quo vadis?' Where shall the first blow fall? Up the old road they go, to hammer on the door of my father's old home, where the dearest of life's memories are enshrined. 'Your rent or your house and land' was the challenge. 'Yes or No?' Answer - 'No!!! for I'll abide on the Land League's side and pay no rent to you'. The door was smashed to 'smithereens', the fire quenched on the hearthstone, and all within thrown out in the rain. 'Owen's old walls' became a hut and shelter for a little while. Though the fight for the old home was lost by the defenders, the cause had won. The lordling had learned an unexpected lesson and became a wiser, if not a better man. His threats and military forces failed to intimidate, and realizing that others must follow the same bold stand, he ceased his nefarious work.

And those evicted were victors
Though the enemy seemed to have won,
Though his ranks were strong; yet being in the wrong,
The battle was not yet done.
For, sure as the morning follows
The darkest hour of night
No question is ever settled,
Until it is settled right.

I hope the landlord is in or on his way to Heaven, for his family heads (The Burkes of Marble Hill) were never real tyrants, and they always stayed by the old faith. I confess, however, that this was not my sentiment when I read about the scene, and the ejaculations uttered were not exactly like those in the prayer book'.

('Woodford "Reminiscences"' is from a booklet published privately by Fr. Francis O'Farrell on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of his brother Patrick priest in 1934).



R.C. Church, Woodford.

The Rent Agitation in Woodford (Ballinasloe's "Western News")

We are pleased to learn the rent question on the property of Sir Henry Burke of Marblehill which has been so fiercely agitated in Woodford during the last six months has at last terminated, because of the demands of the tenants having been unconditionally accepted on last Saturday. It is much to be regretted that these demands, which, as far as we can learn, were just and reasonable in themselves, were not acceded to before that large and populous, and hitherto peaceful district was brought to the brink of civil war. Police and emergency huts have been erected there at considerable expense, and quite an army of extra police have been drafted into Woodford and all for what? To collect a few hundred pounds of rent for the landlords out of that barren mountainous district and that too in a year like this, when the farmers of more highly-favoured

localities are barely able to live. We understand that the tenants of the Woodford property offered to pay their rents some three or four months ago subject to fifteen per cent reduction, provided all the legal costs incurred up to that date were wiped off. This offer was sternly refused and as sternly adhered to by the people. Many efforts to effect a compromise were attempted by well-meaning friends, but the Woodford people would not yield one jot of their original demand, and all those who were under notice of ejectment had firmly and unitedly resolved to submit to eviction rather than submit to the terms attempted to be imposed on them. The spirit and determination of the people triumphed over all obstacles, and those who so stubbornly refused the offers made them at the commencement of the struggle, were at last very glad to accept them. We congratulate the men of Woodford and their intelligent leaders on the successful termination of the stuggle, and the triumphant victory they have achieved.

(Editorial sub-leader in 'The Western News and Weekly Examiner' Ballinasloe, Saturday June 12 1886).

The Lewis-Aylwards of Ballynagar (1650 - 1973)

by Cathal Stanley and Marian Lyons

In this article we see how the Aylwards were transplanted by Cromwell to Ballynagar, Co. Galway, where we follow their fortunes down to the present day. John Aylward 1, was the eldest son of Matthew Aylward, first cousing and heir of Sir Peter Aylward of Faithlegg, and he joined the 70-odd other Catholic exlandowners from Co. Waterford that were transplanted to Connacht. According to his transplantation certificate, dated 9 December, 1653, he took with him 86 persons, 72 acres of winter corn, 154 cows, 34 yearlings, 104 garráns, (a small inferior breed of Irish horse), 380 sheep, 15 goats and 26 swine. According to family tradition, he also took with him two stone heads, believed to represent ancestors. These heads are still kept by the family; they have been dated to the 17th or early 18th century, so it is possible, that they came from Faithlegg, but they may also have formed part of the monuments erected by John Aylward's son, Peter. In 1656 John Aylward received a grant of 2000 plantation acres (about 3,000 statue acres) in Connacht; this was at Ballynagar, which now became the home of the family. He was succeeded by his eldest son, namely Peter Aylward of Ballynagar, born July 1653. When he came of age, Peter sought royal confirmation of his Cromwellian grant. The lands contained in the grant (which had themselves, incidentally, been confiscated from various rebellious Burkes) are listed in detail, and although some of the names are now obsolete and unidentifiable, it is possible to work ut from a large-scale map, the boundaries of Ballynagar estate at this time. It would appear to have comprised the following modern townlands:

Statute acres

Ballinlough	199	Ballynakill	146	Gortnakilla	142
Ballydaly	46	Cappaghcon	91	Knockadrum	140
Ballyglass	44	Cappaghconbeg	320	Lecarrow	250
Ballygowan	741	Coarsepark	152	Mountainpark	171
Ballynagar	108	Cregg	170	Newtown	204
		Cuilleendaegh	81	Silverstream	33
		Garraunphaudeen	46	Tulla	160
				TOTAL:	3,244

Ballingar House.

These lands are in the old parish of Ballynakill and Barony of Leitrim, Co. Galway, and they can be identified on Sheet 125 of the six-inch Ordnance Survey for the county. They form a fairly solid wedge of land to the west and southwest of the modern village of Abbey, seven miles west of Portumna. In fact the Aylwards soon expanded their estate, acquiring land both north and south, especially round Woodford village, where they took in the woods of Rossturra, and the moorlands of Allendarra on the Slieve Aughty Mountains. During the Jacobite War, Peter Aylward was one of the many Catholic gentry indicted for high treason by the Willimite authorities, but he was pardoned under the Articles of Limerick, 12 May 1699.

He seems to have taken advantage of the brief period of Catholic supremacy under James II, to erect a small chapel beside a holy well opposite Ballynagar House. The last vestiges of this chapel were destroyed recently when a tree fell on them, but the stone of dedication is still preserved on the site, and bears the inscription: "PETER AYLWARD & ELIZABETH FRENCH HIS WIFE WHO BUILT THIS IN THE HONOUR OF OUR BLESSED VIRGIN MARY IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 1689". A similar stone nearby evi-

dently commemorates the co-founder, for it reads: IHS 1689". "SECUS CONOLAN BUILT THIS". PRAY FOR HIM". Near the remains of this chapel is a curious vault in the hillside, decorated with a stone head and a crude carving entitled: "THE RESURRECTION OF OUR SAVIOUR"; This is perhaps the tomb of Peter Aylward!

A few years later we find Peter Aylward involved in religious affairs. At the end of the 17th century, the Franciscans were forced to leave their friary of Kilnalahan, the ruins of which have given its name to Abbey village. Before leaving, they deposited all their valuables in the hands of the local Catholic gentry, including "Mr. Pierce Aylward", who accepted the custody of "one silver chalice and one patena weighing ten or eleven ounces".

Peter Aylward's later years were troubled by disputes with his neighbours. In 1684 he and Sir Henry Waddington of Clostoken, near Athenry, had partitioned between them the wood of Kylagowen, near Woodford. However, disputes arose over meres and bounds, and in 1700, Peter went to law with Waddington's two daughters and co-heirs, Lettice (Ussher) and Dorothy (Tempest/ Ormsby). the squabble was still going on at the time of Peter's death.

Meanwhile, Peter was also in trouble at the other end of his estate, where some Burkes disputed his claim to part of the townland of Shanbally, north of Abbey, "in which a wood of oak timber stands", sold by Peter to one Isaac Ringrose. Peter Aylward married Elizabeth, daughter of Christopher French of Tyrone, Co. Galway. After his death, she vigorously pursued his claim to the wood of Kylagowen, and obtained a decree in her favour. However, furtheer quarrels arose, and the last we hear of the case, is a chancery order of 1721, for a "commission of perambulation", consisting of two representatives of each party, to tour the area in dispute and determine the bounds. Elizabeth was still alive in 1724, when she drew up a deed between herself and her children. We last hear of her in 1726, when she released the Ballynagar property from her rights and settlements, which she handed over to her eldest son, John. She and Peter Aylward had issue: (1). John II and (2). Matthew (3). James. 1. John Aylward Ii, succeeded his father, as we shall see below but firstly, 2. Matthew Aylward of Reaghan, Tynagh (north of Abbey). As "Matthew Aylward of Ballynagar, merchant", he witnessed his mother's deed of 1726. The following year (presumably after her death), he launched a legal assault on his elder brother, John II, claiming some rights on the Ballynagar estate. The case dragged on until 1736, when his plea was dismissed (despite an assertion to the contrary in his will). Meanwhile Matthew was also at war with the Franciscans, to whom Denis Daly of Raford had granted a house adjoining their old friary of Kilnalahan; but "when those friars came there in 1730, they found one Matthew Aylward following the soap boiling trade in it. They desired him to leave their house with bag and baggage", but he appealed to Daly, who allowed him to remain on in none too peaceful co-existance with the friars. In his will (dated 1739), Matthew directed that he is to be buried in the Abbey of Kinnaleigh (Kilnalahan), and to leave all his property to "my dear friend, John Burke of Reaghan" - (also buried at Abbey beneath a splendid monument). He was not married, but a natural son, namely John Aylward of Abbeyville, a farmer, is mentioned in his father's will, and witnessed Barbara Aylward's deed of 1760.

Jane (1685) Honora and Margaret were his children. John Aylward II, of Ballynagar studied at the Middle Temple, London, 1703. In 1725 he conformed to Protestantism, as many Catholics did at this time to safeguard their estates against Penal Laws; in his case, as in many others, it was a mere formality, and the Aylwards continued to live as Catholics. He died intestate in July 1732, and in the following September all his stock, household goods and furniture, were sold to meet his debts; the stock consisted of "several choice breeding mares for coach and saddle, with colts and fillies of several ages, a black stallion of the coach breed, and a choice of well-bred stallion, and six score bullocks". The following year, the Ballynagar estate - "with a convenient dwelling-house and very good gardens, coach-house, stables, barns and other commodious offices" - was let for a term of years. John married Barbara, daughter of Garrett Nugent of Dysert, Co. Westmeath, who was granted administration of his estate, 11 Nov. 1732. Elizabeth, Mary, Barbara and Bridget were her issue.

John Aylward III, (John French Aylward) was a minor when he succeeded to Ballynagar; his guardian was Emond Shanly of Dublin. In 1740 he was admitted to Trinity College, Dublin (his father, as we have seen, had "conformed" in 1725). During his tenure of Ballynagar, he leased out various parts of the estate, no doubt in an attempt to make the family solvent. An advertisment in the Faulkner's Dublin Journal of 29 Dec. 1753, assures us that the townland advertised contains: "near 400 acres of choice land, with a tract of good pasturable mountain adjoining; a small river abounding with trout, runs for an English mile thro' the said ground, and great plenty of hares, partridges, and game of most sorts on the said land adjoining". He died unmarried, in 1755, and was succeeded by his brother, Nugent Sylvester Aylward of Ballynagar born 1727/28. In his will, he desired to be buried "privately but decently" in the parish church of Ballynakill, and left all his personal property to his wife. He died in 1783.

Nugent Sylvester married Catherine, daughter of Patrick French of Tyrone, Co. Galway. Upon their marriage, she conformed to Protestantism. After her husband's death, she lived at Waterdale, Co. Galway, where she died, and is buried with him at Ballynakkill. Her administration was granted, to their only child, Mary, died 1789. She erected a large alter-tomb over her parents at Ballynakill, with the touching inscription: "In grateful rememberance of the tenderness and affection of kind and indulgent parents....whose souls may participate the Eternal Bliss of the heavenly mansions. Amen".

Michael Widman Aylward of Ballynagar, being only a third son with a small chance of succeeding to the estate, went to Spain in 1751 and joined the Spanish forces. Then, upon the death of one brother and disappearance of the other, his chance of succeeding at Ballynagar abruptly changed, and he decided to return to Ireland. In 1756 he received permission to resign from the army, "to go to Ireland to his home town, in order to attend to his affairs'.

Upon returning to Co. Galway, Michael lived at Lisdurra, Woodford east of Abbey. In 1780 he took at Galway Assizes the modified oath of allegiance, which had been devised for Catholics, and qualified for voting rights. However, after all his trouble to get back to Ireland, he had to wait 27 years until at last his brother died, and he succeeded at Ballynagar. Less than two years later, he died, 1785. In his will, he directed he was to be privately buried at Ballynakill

and left all his personal property to his three children; he desired his executors 'to distribute in charity to the poor of the parish of Ballynakill, whatever the circumstances of my children will allow', and named two members of the French family as guardians to his heir, with instructions "to do their best to educate my said only son to some profession, either to the law, or any he may be found to have a capacity for".

He married (i) Sarah, daughter of Patrick French, Tyrone, Co. Galway (sister of his brother's wife) by whom he had issue:

1. John Michael Aylward 1, who succeeded his father.
2. Mary married William Burke of Moyglass, Co. Galway.
1. Barbara married William Malony of Rockvale, Mallow. Michael Aylward married Jane Daly of Killimore Castle, Co. Galway. After his death, she lived in Loughrea. By Michael Aylward she had one issue:
2. Michael, of Galway town, born 1785, died 1824. He made a prerogative will, of which no copy appears to have survived.

John Michael Aylward (1), of Ballynagar, was born in 1780. His guardians, in accordance with his father's wish that he should enter a profession, enlisted him in the British Army, where Catholics could now hold a commission. Unlike his father, who had reigned so briefly at Ballynagar after waiting so long, he was head of the family during nearly the whole of his long life. It was a disasterous period, for he seems to have been incapable of managing his financial affairs, as may be seen for the large collection of IOU's, mortgages, leases, sales, and lawsuits among the Aylward-Lewis MSS dating from his time. Large tracts of land had to be sold off to pay his debts, and the estate was in Chancery from 1813. He died at last intestate, 1861.

John Michael met and married, Jane, daughter of Anthony Lambert of Alnwick. She died 1864, having had issue:

1. John Michael Aylward II, who succeeded his father.
2. Cicely Connolly.
3. Jane Maria. John Michael Aylward II of Ballynagar born Dublin 1809, educated at Clongowes. Wood College, and T.C.D. He married Mary, daughter of Thomas Higgins of Carrowpadeen, Co. Galway. It was an unpropitious match, probably forced by Higgins, who was one of the creditors of Aylward senior, but it lasted until 1853, when they separated, Mary receiving an annuity of £75. They had no issue and she died 1864, in Dublin. He died intestate in Dublin also in 1864, and is buried at Ballinakill. Thus the male line of the Aylwards of Faithlegg, Co. Waterford and Ballinagar, Ballinakill Co. Galway, became extinct. We now conclude briefly with the fortunes of the female line of Aylward-Lewis's, down to the present.

   John Michael Aylward Lewis I (1827-1873) married Hanna White, of Mountrath, Co. Laois in 1853, and Hanna administered the estate during the Land War period, when Ballinagar became the scene of monster meetings, evictions, boycotts and other dramatic events. On Dec. 13th 1885, the front of Ballynagar House was damaged by a midnight explosion. Fr. Fahy C.C., Ballinakill was arrested here in Sept. 1886, and sent to Galway Jail, after riots at Woodford courthouse, and later in Galway city, where thousands gathered to prevent his imprisonment and that of eighteen others, who were accompanying him.

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Their children were named Thomas White, the family historian, who died in 1907, Richard George, who drowned in Lough Derg 1881, and Robert Travers who married in 1927, and whose family decendants still live in England at Duns Tow Manor, Oxon.
The eldest child, John Michael Aylward Lewis II (1854-1917), succeeded his father, becoming High Sheriff of Co. Galway, in 1903. He married Catherine Frances Greene, Dublin in 1889, and had two children, namely Kathleen Adelaide (1809) who married Wilifred Paton (1919) and lived at Lyndhurst, Hants, without issue. The second child, John Aylward Lewis (1893-1951) succeeded to Ballinagar after Hanna's death (1913) but by then the estate had been divided after the Wyndham Land Act (1903), depleted by the intemperance of the last Aylwards, and further eroded by the Irish Free State Land Act of 1922.

Accordingly, he sold Ballinagar and went to live at Derrahiney, outside Portumna, where he died in 1951. He married Dorothy McGusty in 1915, but they had no family, and after his death she lived in Portumna, before her death in St. Luke's Home, Cork.

Postscript:

My thanks to Patrick Melvin, Dail Library, for this material by Julian C. Walton, Dublin, which I have condensed here necessarily. We look forward to Patrick's forthcoming book on the "Landed Gentry of Co. Galway" and to Julian's further researches into the Lewis-Aylward families, especially during the last dramatic era of Ballynagar (1880-1920). I wish to thank Michael Collins, Pallas, Tynagh, whose memory is still excellent on the years he worked at Ballynagar (1910-20), and also to Sonny Murray and Pat Mitchell present encumbent of Ballynagar, for their help. I intend to do an article later on the social life of both Landlords and tenants at Ballynagar, and would welcome any contributions or family reminiscences from readers.

Sweet Ballygowan

by Paddy Felle,

All you loyal sons of Erin, I hope you'll draw near
For the rights and the wrongs of our country to hear
In the days that are past, when they drove us away
From our dear home in Ireland, far over the sea.
O it's well I remember, I was but a boy,
To hear my poor mother, how sad she did cry,
When her husband refused, the rent to pay down
And evicted we were, from sweet Ballygowan.

CHORUS
Oh hurrah for our banner, it's waving there still
Well guarded by Abbey and sweet Abbeyville
Coolfin's lovely castle o'er the valley looks down
For to brighten the glories of Sweet Ballygowan.

On the day of the evictions, some thousands were there
To conquer these tyrants, each man did prepare,
When the officer's bugle gave a loud shrill
For to make an attack on Thomas Finn's mill.
The Orange advanced for to break in the door
To take down the green flag representing our shore.
We poured boiling water on the Orangemen down.
They'll remember the day when they saw Ballygowan.

When the crew from the North was dejected they said,
They wired for the Army to come to their aid.
The soliders obeyed at the word of command,
And they marched in by Abbey to take up our land.
They surrounded our village; we were forced to give in,
and they soon made a prisoner of brave Thomas Finn,
Who fought for his country, his life he laid down
For to conquer the Lewis's and Sweet Ballygowan.

John Burke and Mike Murray were evicted that day,
Likewise Pat McDonagh now cold in the clay.
Our brave Thady Meara whose might did not fail,
And our hero John Kelly was sent off to jail.
Old Patsy Burke, now he gave great abuse
To the rack-renting tyrant they called Harry Lewis.
John Minogue, James Guerin, their farms were laid down
For to close the evictions of Sweet Ballygowan.

But now there's great changes over there, I can see
By a letter that came o'er the water to me.
As I read through the lines, it appears to be plain
That we soon will be home in our farms once again.
The houses are building, I'm told they are grand,
All waiting for me in my own native land.
So we'll hoist the green banner and the Shamrock we'll drown
And sing the bright praises of Sweet Ballygowan.

NOTE: We are at present researching the Lewis evictions in the Ballygowan and Abbey area 1887-1891, and intend to publish it in our next volume, (see list of evicted tenants on the Lewis Estate). Ed.

Maude Gonne McBride

"That afternoon James Tully, of Woodford, in Co. Galway, had called on me. I had never met him before, but heard he had been ruthless in shooting landlords, and I had even heard him called "the mild-eyed assassin". As I listened to his soft Western voice and looked at his white hair and extraordinary clear yet dreamy grey eyes, I doubted the ruthlessness, and I remembered regretfully that Lord Clanricarde, the great Galway evictor, was still alive, a very rich old miser, living under police protection in London Clubland. Tully said he was a ruined man though that did not worry him, as he could always emigrate and join his brother who was doing well in Australia; but he was concerned about the fate of friends and neighbours he had induced to join the movement, and who were now living in miserable Land League huts, eating their hearts in idleness and watching their derelict farms and starving children. Now the movement had broken down and politicians avoided them; - public opinion was no longer interested, the rigid boycott of land grabbers no longer enforced, and the evicted farms were being given to landlords' men, who had stood apart from the struggle and would profit by Land Purchase Acts, from sacrifices they had refused to share. Tully had startled me by saying he had been sent to Dublin to ask me, because I stood apart from all political parties, to lead the evicted tenants' movement. If I consented, he and other equally determined men were ready to back it. As I listened, I had longed to consent, and devote my whole energy to organising these victims into a formidable body, which it would be hard to crush; but I was pledged to force open the gates of Portland Prison, where twenty-seven still more unselfish men were being driven mad. Reluctantly, I told Tully the evicted tenants must find some other leader, but that I would speak about them at every meeting I addresed. He looked very disappointed; he knew as well as I did that speaking of them at meetings, as more of the Parliamentarians were doing, would be of little use. It would take one man's or one woman's whole time, force and energy, regardless of risks and consequences, to galvanise the remnants of the defeated Land League movement into active life again. The interview with Tully spoilt my usual enjoyment of the debate at the Contemporary Club. Nevison saw me home, but his cheery friendliness didn't dissipate my depression, and the strange clear eyes of Tully with their reproachful look, came between me and sleep. In the morning I told Dagda I felt we both needed to get away from Dublin, and that the West was nice, and the dog agreed. At Broadstone Station, I took tickets for Loughrea, and thought we would drive about in Mail cars to see the country. Vaguely I though I would like to see Tully again. There were many constabulary in the village of Woodford, as I got off the mail car later, and also in the hotel. The landlord's wife ushered me into a little private room for lunch. "What are the police here for"? "To stop the proclaimed meeting", she answered. I enquired after Mr. Tully. "He's still in Dublin and lucky he is, for they are looking for him", she said.

A tall countryman in a frieze coat came in, "It was good of you coming, Miss Gonne", he said "but it isn't fair to ask you to speak at a proclaimed meeting". "I am here by chance", I said, "but I'll speak at the meeting, if you want me to". "I thought Mr. Tully had sent you". "No, I came to see Mr. Tully, but I

hear he is away". I arranged to meet my new friend and a car at the crossroads outside the village. As we drove, he told me that the meeting was called to protest against some land-grabbing and call a boycott on grabbers; the police held Woodford, so word had been sent out to meet elsewhere. Dagda in great spirits trotted beside the car. Near a little wood we found a couple of hundred men gathered and great cheers were raised when they recognised me. The chairman was speaking, and when he got down I climbed on his car and spoke, first on the National Question, that the people would only get their rights when Ireland's freedom was won, and then of the immediate duty for them all to stand together and to boycott any land-grabbers. I had not got far before I saw a body of some hundred Royal Irish Constabularly marching along the road towards the meeting. I bent down and asked the chairman, who looked nervous, if we were to go on. "Just do as you think best, my lady".

I continued speaking. The constabulary formed up in ranks on three sides of the meeting. The crowd gathered closer round the car. "Go on, Miss", they shouted to me and, being excited, I repeated myself; it didn't matter, for everyone was too excited to notice what I said. The officer in charge of the Constabulary and a superintendent of police pushed their way towards the platform. The superintendent said: "Miss Gonne, if you continue, I shall arrest you". "That's your affair, and much good it will do you," I laughed, and continued my speech. "If you go on, I shall give orders to fire" said the officer. "Go on, go on", cheered the crowd. I heard an order given. I saw the constabulary get their rifles at the ready and heard the click of the triggers. Most of the men now had their backs to the platform and were facing the police; they had nothing but ash plants in their hands, but were ready to fight; some still shouted to me to go on. "No," I said, "Men, you know your duty; the proclaimed meeting is now over", and I got off the car.

There was disappointment; one man said: "You should have gone on". I heard another man say: "You couldn't expect a woman to fight". I said: "If you had guns I would have gone on; the rifles were pointed at you, not at me; I couldn't see unarmed men shot down". Perhaps I had been wrong in not letting the Woodford evicted tenants fight and be shot down. Dead men might have aroused the country as living men could not, and at least made the evicted tenants a live issue. I believed that the agrarian and National struggle were inherently one; the land and the people, from whose union the national soul is born".

(From the Autobiography of Maude Gonne McBride "A Servant of the Queen", Chapter XVI, "Days of Gloom")

Note:-

The reference to the "crossroads outside the village" and "near a little wood" where this dramatic meeting occurred, has not been indentified, to my knowledge? Powerscross would seem to fulfill the descriptive requirements, but perhaps readers can confirm or dispute this?

Cathal Stanley.

"Doctor" Thomas Tully's Eviction —

"The Plan of Campaign was in full swing for the past two years. Appeals for rent reductions were not even acknowledged, so all rents were withheld. This was met by vigorous proceedings by Clanricarde's agent - Edward Shaw Tenner. Evictions had started in '85, one tenant; '86, four tenants; '87, seven tenants. The year 1888 saw a determined effort to smash the Woodford tenants. Twenty four tenants were evicted and one of these was an example of the determination of these Galway farmers not to give way. The 1888 evictions at Woodford were in progress at the end of August and on Sat. 1st. September came the turn of "Dr." Tully who had got the nickname because of his activities in the Plan of Campaign. His farm at Looscaun consisted of seventeen acres of very bad land. He refused to pay rent, because of the treatment of the other tenants and not because he was unable. His house* was a sturdy slated building and Dr. Tully was determined to emulate the defenders of Saunders' Fort who made such a noted resistance in '86. On this September morning, the police and military were early astir. No time was lost on their march from the camp at Clondagoffe to Looscaun. The police took elaborate precautions to keep the crowd away. They even placed a guard around the church at Looscaun to prevent the bell being rung to call the people to witness the eviction. This, however, did not stop the people from coming, but they found that the police would not allow them use the roadway by the house and the fields for some distance around were held by soldiers. The authorities were taking care to prevent the people witnessing the forthcoming struggle at close quarters. Two green flags flying from the chimney tops indicated what might be expected in the line of resistance. The attacking force came well prepared. They clearly considered the taking of Dr. Tully's house an engagement of importance in the Land War. A brand new battering ram was produced. This was the first occasion on the Clanricarde estate to use the battering ram.

* *now Buglers*

At 8.30 a.m. all preparations were completed, and bailiffs and police made their first assault. They attempted to put ladders against the end walls to enable them to get on the roof. A shower of stones from the house drove them back. The attackers re-formed and directed their efforts to trying to get the ladders against the front walls. The defenders produced forked sticks (gabhlogues) to push away the ladders. On the rising ground around, the neighbours cheered as the attackers failed to get a foothold. The ladders were abandoned and the 'emergency men' made an attempt to clear away an embankment of earth that had been piled against the gable ends. They used a cover - the Roman 'testudo' - but it did not give them sufficient protection from the heavy stones which rained down on them. Seeing that they could not break in through the gable, they withdrew. Then the police decided to make on onslaught without the bailiffs. The officers drew their swords while the constables fixed bayonets. The onlookers shouted defiance, then came the assault.

Ladders were again brought forward in face of a fierce barrage of stones. The

sticks and other implements were produced to prise the ladders away from the walls. One policeman grabbed an iron bar which was being used for this purpose, but quickly let it go. It had been heated just in case someone got that idea. The weight of numbers soon told on the defenders and police and officers succeeded in clambering up the ladders. As they jabbed with their bayonets and slashed with their swords, the defenders met them in a hand to hand struggle. They broke holes in the roof and wrestled with the armed police and sent them sliding from the roof. While this fierce struggle was going on at the centre, a cluster of policemen gained a foothold on the roof at one end. They too, were sent headlong to the ground. But another body of police seized the opportunity of this diversion to climb through a window in the other gable while the defenders were so fully occupied elsewhere. This flank attack decided the issue. The house of Dr. Tully had been taken.

The prisoners were handcuffed and taken through the roof and down the ladders outside. As the girls came down from the house they called for "three cheers for the Plan of Campaign". Many of the defenders bore bloody traces of their fight - one man named Sheehan had a particularly ugly bayonet wound under his eye. Dr. Tully was the last prisoner brought out. He had been severely beaten with the butt end of a rifle in the ribs. He had to be carried out by the police and was removed in an ambulance wagon to Looscaun police station where he had to be put to bed. His fight helped to draw attention to the Clanricarde estate.

Tully is notorious for a speech he made in 1882, in which he is said to have recommended 'leaden pills'** for landlords. Tully is a boat-builder by trade, owned 17 acres of poor land from Clanricarde at a rent of £2.10s.; P.L.V., £4.0s.. On this land he had built a house at a cost of over £200. He joined the Combination, not for himself but from sympathy with the whole body of tenants. Tully showed his earnestness by joining them in their demands and submitting to eviction and to the loss of all his interest in his house and holding. We may condemn this man's action in joining the combination when he had no personal cause of complaint, but we may equally recognise the fact that he did so on public grounds, and that he made an enormous sacrifice for the sake of the tenants as a body. This should not divert our sympathy from the great mass of tenants who undoubtedly, as was admitted by a previous agent, Joyce in 1886, to Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, were unable to pay their full rents when this dispute began".

** *(G. Shaw Lefevre M.P. "Incidents of Coercion 1888.) Contributed by Frank Mullen.*

NOTE: We intend to publish an article on "Doc" Tully later, and have recently received some data from his Australian descendants, especially Mrs. Fleur Lehare, who presented a plaque in his memory, which will be unveiled during the Heritage Centenary (Aug. '86), at the house where he was evicted in Looscaun. The name Tully (Mac an Tuile and O Maoltuile) probably originated in the Cavan/Longford region, and they were hereditary physicians to the O'Reillys and O'Connors. Local tradition asserts that the Tullys fought with O'Neill and O'Donnell at Kinsale, and after returning North on the march with O'Sullivan Beare, they settled above Woodford, after meeting some handsome ladies from the locality near the River Shannon.

John Roche M.P. (1848-1914)

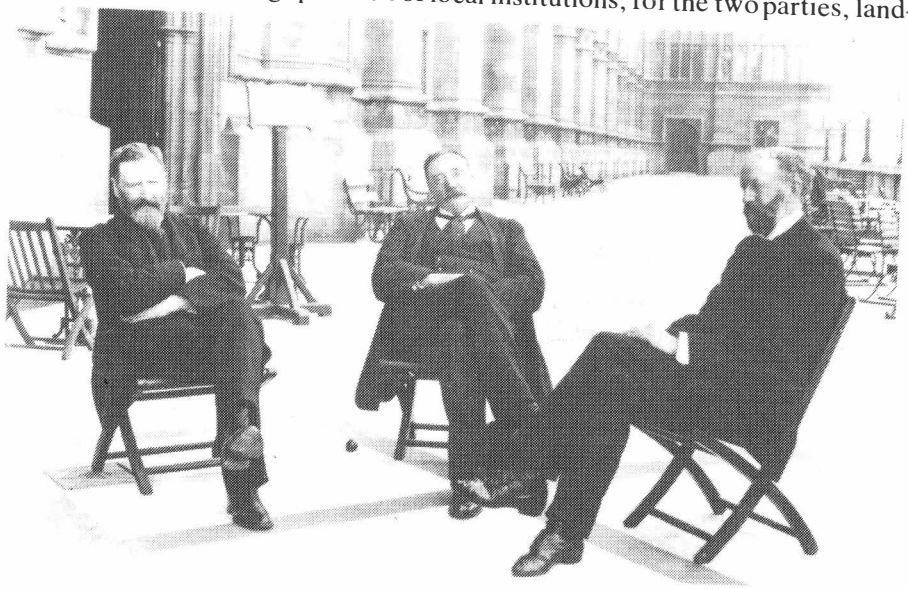
by Desmond Roche

John Roche, a native of Woodford was member of Parliament for East Galway for twenty-five years. He succeeded the well-known Matt Harris of Ballinasloe - Fenian, Parnellite and land warrior - on Harris' death in 1890. Roche was elected unopposed in the resulting bye-election, and had little difficulty in winning the seat against the Parnellite candidate in the 1892 General Election. He held the seat, then unopposed, until his own death in 1914. He had gained both popularity and respect in the 1880's land struggle and lever lost either, despite the deplorable faction fighting in the Irish Party which followed Parnell's death. 'Honest John Roche', as he was known, he remained throughout his public life.

John Roche was born in 1848, eldest son of a family of seven which included five girls. The second boy, William, joined the priesthood but died at a relatively early age. He was then curate in Ballinakill parish. The Roches of Woodford can be traced as far back as the 18th Century; They were there possibly from an earlier date. A family tradition says that they came originally from Limerick. (See biographic notes).

William Roche, John's father died in 1872, aged 52 years and John took over the milling business and farm. He seems to have taken an early interest in politics but as yet not on a national scale. After an initial defeat he eventually became a member of the Loughrea Board of Guardians. Wilfrid Scawen Blunt first encountered Roche in April, 1886 at a meeting of the Board, where the main business was the annual election of Chairman and vice-Chairman.

'It was an interesting specimen of local institutions, for the two parties, land-



Denis Kilbride, T. P. O'Connor and John Roche at Westminster.

lord and Home Rule, were brought face to face, the landlord influence being the stronger through what they call 'ex-Officio members, country gentlemen brought in from a distance. The Home Rulers were mostly residents in the town. Their spokesman, Roche, however was from Woodford, the place where the process-server, Finlay, was murdered a month ago. Roche made not a bad speech, appealing to the better feelings of the landlords to perform one last act of grace by allowing the election of a Home Ruler to one of the vacant offices; it would be their last chance of ever conciliating the people, for the handwriting for them was already on the wall, and next year, it would be the people, not they, who would rule. There was one landlord, Major Rogers, who partly supported them, but the rest all voted doggedly and in silence for their own candidates'.

The diehards included Sir Henry Burke of Marble Hill, landlord of Woodford, a Catholic. The landlords' determination to hold on grimly to every ounce of power, even in the relatively insignificant local business of poor relief, carried its own lesson - a lesson underlined by the total landlord dominance of the Grand Juries, which then exercised far greater power in local affairs.

It is obvious from Blunt's account that Roche had already emerged as an outstanding local leader. He was moreover beginning to make some mark in national politics, and to demonstrate a degree of independence not altogether welcome to the London and Dublin managers of the National League. Some six months before the Loughrea meeting, Roche, with his brother-in-law, Patrick Keary, already leading figures in the local branch of the National League, took the initiative in establishing the Woodford Tenants' Defence Association, a clear sign of coming agrarian struggle in the disrict. But an agrarian struggle in Woodford or elsewhere, was the last thing Parnell and his close associates wanted at that juncture. The first of Gladstone's Home Rule Bills had been promised and would be debated with every prospect of success over the coming months.

Much depended on showing the Liberals that Gladstone's Home Rule formula was the ultimate answer to the Irish problem, and the exposure of Parnell's inability to keep the peace in Ireland would amount to a disaster. At this juncture, the threatened resumption of the land war in East Galway could be an irredeemable blunder.

The Woodford Tenants' Defence Association, on its side, saw a different picture. The possibility of Home Rule had to be balanced against the risk or certainty of immediate eviction of a number of its members. Moreover the Association since its establishment in November 1885, had a modest success coupled with the effect of breaking new ground. This was in the case of Sir Henry Burke of Marble Hill, whose estate took in the town of Woodford, together with the surrounding land. As already noted, Sir Henry was a Catholic, and he was chosen by the landlord faction for this as well as for other reasons to lead the resistance to the tenants' demands. The Woodford tenants made a demand for a 50 per cent abatement of rent on Burke during 1885, which Burke rejected, offering 15 per cent. The Tenants' Defence Association, responded with a strategy which closely resembled what later became the Plan of Campaign. Its outlines were sketched by Patrick Keary, whose speech, delivered in Ballinagar and reported in the **Western News** of 12 December 1885, indicated the steps to be

followed by the tenants of each estate: (I) agree on a reasonable abatement; (II) make an offer of rents to the landlord less the agreed abatement; (III) if the offer was refused, the lowered rents should be lodged in the bank in the name of trustees.

Keary assured his hearers that in adopting these tactics, they would be following the advice of the party leaders, and there is little doubt that he had in mind a speech made by T.M. Healy in Monaghan on 4 October 1885 advising tenants in that area to adopt the procedure later urged by Keary. When however, in December 1885 John Roche travelled to Dublin to get the support of the National League to their plan of resistance, he was rebuffed by the Central Executive and returned to Woodford with the dispiriting message: 'Pay your rents'. But the tenants, with admirable courage, decided to maintain the attitude of 'No Surrender' and while a few evictions were carried out, the solid front maintained by the tenants discouraged Burke from wholesale action.

A curious aspect of this battle was the case of John Roche, himself whose standing as a prominent local leader marked him out for quick eviction. His humiliation and fall would, it was clearly hoped, help to bring the general body of tenants sharply to heel. Sir Henry's strategy was dictated by Captain Hamilton of the Property Defence Association, who had been called in to conduct the landlords' campaign against their tenants, and this fact probably influenced the tenants' resolve to defend their chairman. A writ of ejectment was actually taken out against Roche, but just before it was due to be put into execution, the Tenants' Defence Association move to frustrate Hamilton's tactic and Roche was instructed to pay his rent with costs. The costs, incidentally, added some 50 per cent to his year's rent.

Details of the conflicts with Clanricarde, Lewis and others will be found elsewhere, and need not be recounted here. The Plan of Campaign was inaugurated at a mass meeting held in the town on 17 October 1886, addressed by John Dillon, William O'Brien, David Sheehy and Matt Harris. During the remaining months of 1886 Roche had high hopes of the Plan as an engine for the reduction of Clanricarde, the tenants' most obdurate opponent. In March 1887 Arthur Balfour took over as Chief Secretary from Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, and his Crimes Bill, introduced in March, became law in July 1887. These moves were not of course of instant effect, but they undoubtedly lessened the possibility of progress in East Galway.

It was probably the wish to show action of some kind that determined William O'Brien to call a mass meeting in Woodford on 16 October 1887, the anniversary of the announcement of the Plan of Campaign. The meeting was proclaimed under the new Crimes Act whereupon the resourceful O'Brien devised a counter move which became one of the best-known episodes of the Land War. This was the famous Midnight Meeting at which O'Brien burned a copy of the proclamation after Fr. Coen had wiped his boots with it. The ingenuity displayed, the total outwitting of the police and military, converted defeat into a moral victory of enormous propaganda value. John Roche was entrusted with the local arrangements. O'Brien wrote to him from Dublin on Thursday 13 October:

My Dear John Roche,

For reasons I will explain to you...

I have now reason to know that a successful defiance of the police, or even a suppression, on Sunday at Woodford will be of enormous importance. I rely on you and all friends to carry out the following arrangments, which ought not to be communicated to anybody except a few confidential men, until the last moment.

1st - If the government do not by Saturday proclaim the meeting, all should assemble at Woodford on Sunday.

2nd - If the proclamation is issued, we should have a midnight meeting at or near Woodford on Saturday night. The resident magistrates and military will probably be at Portumna and Loughrea on Saturday. To dodge them we will send a Member of Parliament to both towns to speak on Saturday evening, while the country people will be assembling.

3rd. Messengers ought to be dispatched early on Saturday morning to all country parishes ten or fifteen miles around, insisting upon all coming to Woodford with as many horsemen as possible. They should not set out before about nine o'clock on Saturday night, and if they bring the bands they ought not to play until they reach Woodford.

4th. You in Woodford ought to prepare five or six hundred torchlights and keep them for distribution when the meeting is assembled.

5th. I will turn up sometime on Saturday night by a route that I need not mention...

Yours sincerely, William O'Brien'.

The speakers, who included Irish and English M.P.s as well as Wilfird Scawen Blunt, addressed the packed crowd from Patrick Keary's house in the main street. Neither Roche nor Keary nor indeed any participant in the act of defiance, prominent or otherwise, was proceeded against at the time by the forces of law and order. Some seven weeks later however, it proved necessary to take action in order to bolster up the government's defence against Scawen Blunt's appeal from his conviction for his attempted meeting at Woodford on 23 October. Then, with cynical disregard for even the appearance of justice, twelve local activists were arrested, including John Roche, Martin M. Egan, Pat Keary, Laurence Egan, 'Doctor' Tully and Joseph Bowles. They were tried in the following December and sentenced to periods of up to a month in gaol. Roche, according to the Galway Gaol register, got fourteen days with hard labour.

This, as it happened, was Roche's second experience of arrest and imprisonment. The first occurred two months earlier in consequence of Blunt's visit to Woodford, details of which will be found in Michael Shiel's article on Blunt (pp.). In the turmoil which followed the abortive meeting, Roche saw a constable attack Pat Keary, in whose field the meeting was to take place and went to his defence. He struck the R.I.C. man with his blackthorn and was arrested on the spot. In giving an account of the affair in the House of Commons in February 1893, he said it was 'one of the proudest acts of my life!' He was sentenced to three weeks in prison when, a day later, he was brought before the Woodford Petty Sessions Court. Blunt got two months and it was his appeal against this

sentence which precipitated the dozen arrests allegedly caused by the Midnight Meeting.

Despite his delicate health, Roche survived his first prison ordeal, but was almost immediately recommitted to Galway Gaol for 14 days with hard labour - from 6 to 20 December. Soon after his release, what was obviously a process of harrassment of Plan of Campaign people, was put into operation. Roche was speaking at a homecoming in celebration of Martin Egan's release from prison when a stone was thrown at one of the ever-watchful police. Some minor disorder broke out and Roche was arrested again with some dozen others.

On this occasion he was sentenced to three months imprisonment and appealed. The appeal was dismissed, but in response, perhaps to defending Counsel's statement that Roche's health 'would certainly not stand another term of imprisonment, as he was more delicate and his lungs were already seriously affected', the sentence was allowed to run from 30 January 1888. His third prison term therefore lasted from 4 April, the date of his committal to the end of the month. It was severe enough. His health broke and his life was so endangered that the government though it best to release him.

That was not the end of the persecution. He was accused of trespass while showing Lady Anne and Wilfrid Blunt over a Clanricarde farm whose former tenant had been evicted. Roche was threatened with 14 days imprisonment, but the case was not pursued. There was also a fifth occasion on which he was in peril of renewed imprisonment, the details of which need not be given here. This persistent aggression, which must have imposed a heavy strain on his fragile constitution, nevertheless failed to halt his activities. He battled on with some succes. Early in 1888 he negotiated a final settlement with Sir Henry Burke. But the going otherwise was hard. Clanricarde remained obdurate and the forces of law and order grew stronger as Balfour orchestrated his drive to smash the Plan of Campaign.

The "Bay", Woodford.

Roche bought with the aid, it is said, of Plan of Campaign funds, some 40 acres of land from the Freers of Clonmoylan, minor landlords in the area. This he used as a refuge for evicted tenants, whom Clanricarde had compelled to shift their National League huts from any land he controlled. Roche gave sites on his land for about fourteen huts. (See John Slattery's account of land war events, as reported by Tom Page.)

In May, 1888, he was a major witness before the Special Commission set up to investigate the Parnell forgeries, and over two days was questioned exhaustively about events in the Woodford area. He was examined by Sir Charles Russell for Parnell, and rigourously cross-examined by the Attorney-General for **The Times.** He stood up remarkably well to the long ordeal. He succeeded in turning many of the Attorney-General's hostile questions to advantage, when his unhelpful answers took the form of short propaganda against landlords and landlordism.

Member of Parliament

In April 1890 Matt Harris died and John Roche was chosen as Party candidate in the bye-election. There was no other candidate, and he thus became M.P. for East Galway at the age of 42. The elevation gave him a better opportunity of winning a hearing for the grievances of the East Galway tenants, in particular those of the evicted tenants. He was the principal witness at the Evicted Tenants Commission of 1893, set up by the new Liberal Government following the General Election of 1892. This election incidentally, was the only one in his parliamentary career in which he was opposed. His opponent was James Lynam, a Parnellite.

In the disastrous fight for the leadership of the Irish Party which resulted from the Parnell divorce case, Roche had sided with Dillon, O'Brien, Davitt and the other land agitators against Parnell. His attitude had nothing to do with clerical opposition to the Chief. He was by no means a bishop's man and took a strong line against Dr. Healy, the Co-adjutor bishop of Clonfert, who had condemned the Plan of Campaign.

In the 1892 election he stood as an anti-Parnellite and won East Galway be 3382 votes agains Lynam's 974. There is no space here to follow John Roche's work at Westminster which ended only with his death on 27 August 1914.

I shall confine myself to a few items in illustration of the impression he made on the House of Commons and on his fellow Party members.

A sub-leader in the **Freeman** mentioned his excellence in support of the Party spokesmen, his strong memory, his quickness and activity in Parliamentary business. He was untiring in attendance at the sittings, "the gentlest of men, retiring, modest, self-effacing, unselfish, good-natured, helpful and kindly". No writer of obituaries is on his oath and it sounds a trifle fulsome. But if even one applies a heavy discount to the eulogy, enough is left to assure us that Roche was fairly highly regarded.

"As long as his health remained to him, he was one of the most constant attendants at the House of Commons, not only in the bright days of promise and of success, but in the days when all was dark and well-nigh hopeless. His

courage never wavered in any situation; his counsel was always eagerly awaited. He exhibited a rare sagacity, and a natural shrewdness".

A few words on his physique. Particulars of convicted prisoners at that time, and probably at present, were recorded and preserved in official registers. The Galway Gaol register of 1887 tells us that John Roche was 5 feet 10 inches in height and weighed 152 lbs. He had brown hair, blue eyes and a fresh complexion. He was then reasonably robust and active, although as we learn from Martin Egan, there were fears that his constitution would not withstand the hardships of prison life. And indeed his health did break down after repeated spells of imprisonment in Galway. The chronic bronchitis and bronchiectasis from which he suffered in later life, were probably triggered off by his gaol terms.

He was fond of open-air life and when at home in Woodford enjoyed country pastimes: shooting and fishing. He was also a horse-racing enthusiast, with an abiding interest in horses and horse-breeding. Woodford in his day and for some years afterwards, had a fine racecourse where regular meetings attracted attendances from Galway, Clare and counties across the Shannon from Limerick to Tipperary and further afield. The smoke-filled London atmosphere, together with long sessions in the House of Commons, must have impaired his health and towards the end of his life he was driven to spending occasional convalescent periods in Brighton, to take the sea air.

Note 1:Henry W. Lucy, **A Diary of the Home Rule Parliament** 1892 - 1895, pp. 38 - 40.

His last appearance in the House of Commons was in May, 1914 for the third reading of the Home Rule Bill. He travelled to London from a Dublin hospital although warned by his doctor that the effort might be fatal. At Euston he had to be carried to a cab on a stretcher. After voting he returned to his hotel in a prostrate condition, but, as the **'Freemans Journal'** said later: happy in the conviction that all was secure and that the work and sacrifice of a lifetime were not in vain'.

He died at his home at Woodford and was buried on 29 August 1914. For some reason his grave in the family plot is unmarked and no memorial exists to John Roche who could reasonably be said to have been the town's most outstanding citizen. He was perhaps fortunate to die before the collapse of the Irish Party in the 1918 General Election, and the rejection by Sinn Féin of virtually all that had been done by Parnell and his successors. He was spared the bitter disillusionment which helped to break John Redmond's heart.

One success eluded John Roche to the end. Clanricarde's tigerish resolve to cling to his Galway estates; to fight with protracted legal action the repeated government attempts to compel him to sell, frustrated until 1915 Roche's dearest wish, the reinstatement after many weary years of the surviving evicted tenants.

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William O'Brien, M.P. (1853 - 1928)

William O'Brien, the "Last Lion of the Land War" was one of that heroic band of lieutenants which, like Napoleon's marshals, had been forged in the heat of battle under Parnell's leadership. O'Brien was imaginative, endlessly inventive, and tireless in working, writing and speaking for the Irish, and particularly for the tenants' cause. East Galway was the scene of some of his most colourful, even flamboyant, feats. He was present at Woodford when the Plan of Campaign was launched in October, 1886 and he planned the midnight meeting in celebration of the anniversary of that event in 1887. In between he figured prominently in the first rent collection under the Plan at Portumna, and was arrested in Loughrea later at the Clans rent collection there.(Note O'Brien's own account of that Portumna event is given below).

William O'Brien was only 34 years of age when the last phase of the Land War opened in 1886. He was born at Mallow, County Cork, on 2 October 1852, one of a family, as T.P. O'Connor wrote "at once of rebels and of almost permanent invalids". He became a journalist, first with the Cork **Daily Herald** and then with the **Freeman's Journal.** He was picked by Parnell in 1881 to be editor of a new weekly, whose aim was to present the nationalist side of the Irish struggle. This was **United Ireland** which O'Brien's brilliant, fiery and occasionally vitriolic journalism, succeeded in making the most influential newspaper in Ireland.

O'Brien entered the House of Commons in 1886, and was one of the famous 86 man Irish Party which went close to winning a measure of independence with Gladstone's first Home Rule Bill. He was initially devoted to Parnell, but eventually, in the dreadful sequel to the divorce, he withdrew support. Subsequently he broke with Dillon, fell away from the Irish Party, and resigned in 1903. Paradoxically that year saw the passing of the great Land Purchase Act, which was the culmination of a combined Unionist - Nationalist movement inaugurated by O'Brien, Lord Dunraven and others in the Land Conference of 1902. The Act of 1903 meant the virtual termination of the Land War.

He was, it must be concluded, a parlimentarian at heart. He could not endure the thought of a divided Ireland. He wrote much about his efforts - extraordinary by any standards for a man of uncertain health - for Irish tenants and irish freedom. his autobiographical novel "When We Were Boys" does not belong to this period, but was written much earlier in Galway Jail during one of his many imprisonments. This extract below, is a vivid description of the rent collection from Clanricarde's tenants in "Evening Memories" 1920. (Maunsell & Co.).

NOTE: We wish to thank the Mallow Field Club for copies of journals dealing with William O'Brien, especially Matt Killeen and family, and Fr. Robert Forde, C.C. We also look forward to an address by Margaret Kelleher, Mallow and Boston College on William O'Brien at the Centenary Commemoration in East-Galway, 1986.

The Portumna Rent Collection (1886)

The first of the "Low-Rent Offices" was held by Mr. Dillon and myself at Portumna early in November, 1886, and it was a portent, the amazing character of which those of a later generation can little realise.

"The November rent-office" of my first experiences in the West, was for the Irish peasant a tribunal as full of dread as was the torture chamber of the Three Inquisitors for the prisoners of the Venetian *Pozzi.* The famished wretches stood shivering for hours in the winter blast, waiting their turn to be admitted one by one to the place of agony, where the agent sat awaiting them at his table with a loaded revolver beside him, and "the rent-warner's" sinister figure, more menacing than the revolver, loomed up Abhorson-like out of the gloom. There was not the mere question of rent to be settled, but the tenant's soul to be laid bare and subjected to unimaginable torments and humiliations. Even if he could wring out of the twisted handkerchief which answered him for a purse, the last crown of a rack-rent, which the law courts have since pronounced to be the meanest form of thievery, he had still to answer the cross-examination of the rent-warner, as to how much he had received for the little yearling at the last fair, how many bonhams had come with the last litter, how much the first outcrop of the reclaimed strip of mountain had fetched, in order to decide whether an increase of rent might not be judiciously clapped on. Did he contemplate marriage, he had to petition for the consent of the agent by a trembling disclosure of the name of the girl of his choice, the amount of her "fortune", the value of the beds or household furniture she would bring to the cabin. Was it his son he was going to settle down, the inquisitors were more merciless still in cutting off the most precious pound of flesh for the profit of the Estate in the transaction. Had he forgotten the rent-warner's "duty" goose at Michaelmas, or awakened his greed for the reclaimed patch of land, or had his son ruffled the august mans's dignity by a saucy answer to some insolent order for "duty-work" (that is to say, unpaid slave labour), or was it a widow who hesitated at the order to send her fair-haired child out to service at "the big house" — the rent-warner's power of life and death was no less deadly effective than the agent's. A scowl on the brow of the one or the other might mean a doubled rent, or a six months ejectment notice, at the expiration of which, even without a farthing of rent unpaid, a man might be evicted from the home of his fathers and of his children, the fields his own labour and money had fertilised torn from him to become the prey of some landgrabber or "big bullock-man", and he and his swept out of sight into the workhouse or the hold of an emigrant ship. They toiled, they starved, they cringed, with as little thought of resistance as their asses had of holding out for the principles of the French Revolution. How often have I seen every act of the tragedy with aching eyes! And how lightly the free children of such bondsmen now estimate the revolution which has struck off their chains!

Such being the traditions, who will picture the feelings of the agent and the rent-warner that day at Portumna? The agent — a Mr. Frank Joyce, a genial young country gentleman who was new to the trade, and soon quitted it with the disgust of a tiger-hunter set to trap mice — was enthroned in his tabernacle,

a repeating rifle slung across his shoulders; the rent-warner sill held his ground like an Abhorson summoned to his own execution; armed policemen hovered around the door in more than their old profusion; but the four thousand Clanricarde tenants who would once have obeyed the rent-warner's notice as fatalistically as the blast of the Last Trumpet — where were they? They were marching in by all the country roads, with banners flying, to the crashing music of that newest aid to rent-collecting — a brass band; but they marched past Mr. Frank Joyce's empty rent office with a scornful roll of kettle-drums, straight to the hotel where Mr. Dillon and I were awaiting them. A deputation of the Estate Committee was selected to present the tenants' ultimatum offering the rents, less the moderate abatement of 25 per cent.

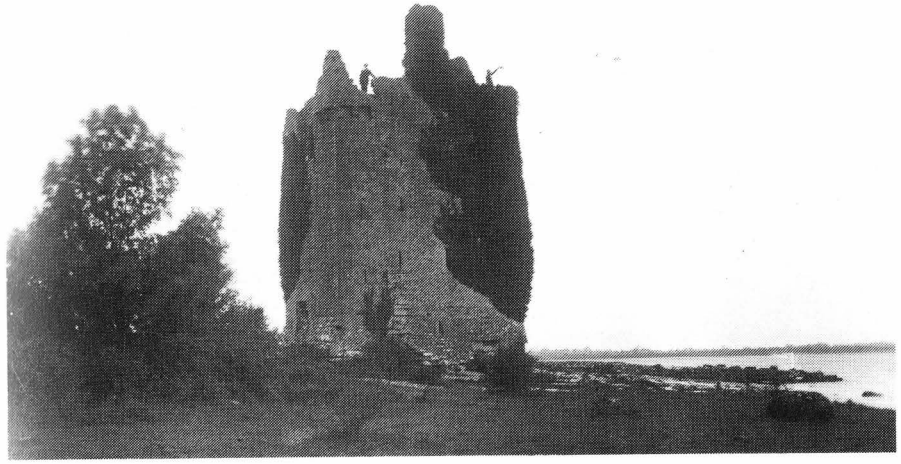
The agent's instructions from the noble Marquis in London were an iron *non possumus.* Where he would once have seen his bondsmen grovelling on their knees for mercy, he now found men as stiff and grim as his own repeating rifle. "I suppose that means war?" was their spokesman's last word. "I'm damn sorry, I suppose it does", was Mr. Frank Joyce's queer answer, spoken with the resignation of an abdicating monarch in presence of the pikeheads of his revolted lieges. That ended Lord Clanricarde's last rent-audit! The deputation returned to the hotel, where Mr. Dillon and myself, with a staff of clerks, opened a rent-office of our own, and for the next five hours we went through a scene as tempestuous as a revolution, and yet one thrilling with an infinite pathos akin to tears, while hundreds of frieze-coated tenants clamoured and fought for admittance; and to strangers only known to them by a mystic faith confided the little rolls of dirty bank-notes which represented all so truly were they aflame with the first raptures of Liberty, even while the thud of the evictors' battering ram shattering their children's homes was already filling their vivid Gaelic imagination with presages of landlord vengeance. Mr. Frank Joyce was departing under police escort, not having received rent enough to defray his car hire, while we were leaving for the night mail train for Dublin with a black bag full of money, through streets where almost every window was illuminated and to the strains of the immortal brass band which had that day sounded "The Last Post" of feudalism in Connacht.

(From "Evening Memories").

Portumna — A Naval Expedition

'This place (the Castle of Clondagoff - or Clondagauv) takes its truly awe-inspiring name from a ruined Norman tower standing on a picturesque promontory of no great height, which juts out into the lovely lake here made by the Shannon. At no great expense, this tower might be so restored as to make an ideal fishingbox. It now simply adorns the holding formerly occupied by Mr. John Stanislaus Burke, a former tenant of Lord Clanricarde. The story of its capture in September is worth telling.

Some days before the evictions were to come off, a meeting was held in Woodford or Loughrea at which one of the speakers rather incautiously and exultingly told his hearers that the defence in 1886 of the tenant's house known as 'Fort Saunders' had been a grand and gallant affair indeed, but that next time 'the exterminators would have to storm a castle'!



Clondagoff Castle.

This put Mr. Tener at once on his guard and as Mr. Burke of Cloondadauv (sic) was set down for eviction, it didn't require much cogitation to fix upon the fortress destined to be 'stormed'.

When the previous evictions were made, the agent and the public forces had marched from Portumna by the highway to Woodford, so that, of course, their advent was announced by the scouts and sentinels of the League from hill to hill long before they reached the scene of action, and abundant time was given to the agitators for organising a 'reception'. Mr. Tener profited by the experience of his predecessors. He contrived to get his force of constabularly through the town of Portumna and into the new castle there, without attracting any popular attention a day or two before he intended to act. He allowed it also to be known that on the 21st of October he meant to attend certain cases in the court at Loughrea at 11 o'clock a.m. As early rising is not a popular virtue here, the townspeople all took it for granted that Cloondadauv would be safe from disturbance by the hosts of Clanricarde for that day at least.

But Mr. Tener had brought up certain large boats to Portumna, and put them on the lake. Rousing his men before dawn, he soon had them all embarked, and on their way swiftly and silently by the river and the lake to Cloondadauv. They reached the promontory by daybreak and as soon as the hour of legal action had arrived, they then landed and surrounded the 'castle'. The ancient portal was found to be blocked with heavy stones and trunks of trees, nor did any adit appear to be available; a young gentleman who had accompanied the party as a volunteer, discovered in one wall of the tower, at some little height from the ground, one of those conduits not infrequently found running down through the walls of old castles, which were used sometimese as wasteways for rubbish from above, and sometimes to receive water-pipes from below.

Looking up into this vent, he saw a rope hanging free within it. Upon this he hauled resolutely, and finding it firmly attached above, came to the conclusion

that it must have been fixed there by the garrison as a means of access to the interior.

Like an adventurous young tar, he bade his comrades stand by and nimbly 'swarmed' up the rope, without thought or care of what might await him at the top. In a few moments his shouts from above proclaimed the capture of the stronghold. It was absolutely deserted; the garrison, confident that no attack would that day be made, had gone off to the nearest village. The interior of the castle was found filled with munitions of war, in the shape of huge beams and piles of stones, laboriously carried up the winding stairs and heaped on all the landing places in readiness for use. On the flat roof of the castle was established a sort of furnace for heating water or oil, to be poured down upon besiegers; and crowbars lay there in readiness to loosen out and dislodge the battlements, and topple them over the assailants'.

(Extract from **'Ireland Under Coercion'** by William H. Hurlbert, an American journalist who was taken on a 'conducted tour' of the East Galway agrarian 'battlefield' by the then agent for Lord Clanricarde Edward Shaw Tener. His book in two volumes, covers most of the evicted areas in Ireland in considerable detail, but from an American capitalist or Unionist landlord viewpoint).

Did Lord Clanricarde Offer Abatements

From 'The Times', November 20 1886 p8 "Ireland".

'... Mr. Dillon is leaving no stone unturned to defeat the legal right of Lord Clanricarde and set an example of successful resistance which the tenantry on other estates will be induced to follow. At the meeting in Portumna yesterday he referred to Lord Clanricarde in the following terms:-

"He writes a letter to 'The Times' announcing that he was going to give his Galway tenantry a reduction of 20%. What I want to point out is this - that he never thought of giving you a shilling, until the Woodford people showed they were men and stood out against him. And what I want to say now is that if the people of the rest of the Clanricarde estate were base and cowardly enough to take that miserable 20% (groans) (which is a delusive 20% because it is only meant for certain individuals and the letter pointed out that it would be only given to a few and denied to the greater number) which was won for them by the determination of the men of Woodford and leave them now in the lurch, all Ireland would cry shame on their conduct.
on their conduct.

"What is is that the men of the Clanricarde estate have determined to do as I expected they would determine? They have made up their mind that so far from leaving the men of Woodford in the lurch, they will follow the example of the men of Woodford; that on the Clanricarde estate the whole of the rest of the tenantry will take example by the stand that was made in the parish of Woodford, and that they will demand that this year which was a worse year than last year for the farmer by a greater deal, they will demand not 20% but 40% and I think their demand is a just and reasonable demand. The Chief Secretary for Ireland in a speech made the other day in England, said the government are bringing such pressure as they could, always acting within the law, on Irish

landlords who would not consent to give reasonable reductions. I cannot help thinking that he had in his mind your landlord, when he was speaking that way (loud cheers). But supposing that in spite of all the pressures that he can bring, he cannot induce these men to act justly, what then? I tell him that we will try our pressure (loud cheers). The tenants on this estate will try to see whether they cannot do what Sir Michael Hicks-Beach has failed to do, and I put it to the people of Ireland and England - where is the injustice of our trying to do what the Government say they were trying to do? And if they failed in doing it, then we will step in and see whether we cannot deal with Lord Clanricarde". (cheers). (Mr. W. O'Brien followed in the same strain).

'The Times' 24 November 1886 p6 Lord Clanricarde and His Tenants

To the Editor of 'The Times'

'Sir, - The "Mr. Dillon who (see 'The Times' of Nov. 20) leaves no stone unturned to defeat Lord Clanricarde's legal rights", appears aware that his feeble case requires the support of systematic misrepresentation or worse, of facts such as the following among others. He seeks to represent my recent kindly-meant offer of 20% rent reduction as delisive, and that it would only assist the few. That is untrue. My offer would have assisted two thirds (about 1,000) of my tenants to the amount of probably thousands of pounds. He also says that I could never be got till now to offer a reduction of even 20%. That is again untrue, and moreover contradicted by a speech of Mr. Dillon himself three weeks back at Woodford, when, as reported, he said that my rents could not be low 'because in a number of cases I had knocked 50% off the rents'. As a fact, both these statements of Mr. Dillon, while contradicting each other, are untrue. But he is still further contradicted by other facts. To go no furher back than last year when my tenants demanded 50% abatement all round, (not merely 25% I can assure Mr. Dillon) I offered to give an abatement where in individual cases it should appear advisable. The tenants peremptorily refused my offer and have only paid one third of that half-year's rents.

Permit me also to point out (as helping to gauge the credibility of Mr. Dillon's representations) how astutely he understates the extravagant and impossible demands of the tenants this year. In a large number of cases the demand for a reduction is not limited to 8s. in the £ as represented by Mr. Dillon, but has been 14s. (60%) below Griffith's Valuation (see the subjoined analysis) leaving only 7½% for mortgages, jointures repairs &c and maintenance of landowner compared to which 'prairie value' is opulence.

Table of Landlord's Outgoings if Rent on 70 Farms as Decreed by Land League in 1886

	In Pounds
Poor rates, county cess, tithe rent charge, costs of management etc. payable by landlord	£0.4.6
Land Court Reduction six shillings in pound (20% below Griffith's Valuation in spring of 1886)	£0.6.0
Further reduction of 40% demanded by Land League in Autumn of 1886	£0.8.0
Leaving for extra law costs, mortgages, repairs &c and landowner's maintenance	£0.1.6
	Total £1.0.0

And my agents inform me that unless I reinstate the two hopeless defaulters I will have been compelled to part with, they will conspire with some bogus trustee to defraud their long-suffering creditor of what even they admit they can pay.

No amount of 'reasonable' conciliation can deal with so fraudulent a conispiracy and surely no one (whether in private or public life) who has ordinary regard for the public interests or private rights, ought to connive at (by submission to) this lawless usurpation by the Land League of such despotic power.

I am, your obedient servant Clanrickarde.
Travellers Club, Pall Mall, S.W. Nov. 22.

PALL MALL GAZETTE November 25 1886 p2
'Lord Clanricarde and His Tenants'

A Reply by Our Commissioner.

'When I was in Ireland about a month ago', writes our Commissioner, 'I telegraphed you strongly recommending that the government should refuse to evict another tenant on the Clanricarde estate, until Lord Clanricarde was on the spot and could assure the government that he had personally investigated the case of his tenants, and that his demand for their eviction was absolutely just. Lord Clanricarde has unintentionally afforded the public strong confirmation of the soundness of this suggestion. His letter in 'The Times' of Nov. 24 shows such utter ignorance of the facts of the case, that it is high time that he was packed off to Galway to find out the truth for himself, before venturing to demand the employment of a small army to eject tenants from holdings, every particle of agricultural value on which they have created themselves.

(1) Lord Clanricarde asserts that the only reduction his tenants demanded last November was 50%. This is not correct. They asked 50% at first but reduced their demand to 25%. A memorial was sent direct signed by Bishop Healy and the priests and tenants stating the fact, and imploring him to grant the concession. This memorial Lord Clanricarde did not deign to acknowledge - possibly did not even deign to read.

(2) Lord Clanricarde says he offered to give reductions last November. This is the first time anyone has heard of his offer. It was certainly not known on the estate, either by his tenants, by the authorities or by his agent. To all representations that reductions ought to be made on the Woodford rents, even in individual cases, Lord Clanricarde replied with an absolute negative. It was a low-rented estate, the rents must be paid in full.

(3) Lord Clanricarde represents Mr. Dillon as giving him credit for knocking off 50% of his rents. Devil a penny did ever Mr. Dillon say that Lord Clanricarde knocked off his rent. It was the abatements enforced by the Land Court and these alone which Mr. Dillon referred to, for the good and sufficient reason that no other abatements have been made on the estate.

(4) Lord Clanricarde implies that the Land Court reduction applies to a large proportion of his tenants, and that the tenants insist on 40% off judicial as well as non-judicial rents. The fact is that the judicial rents form so small a proportion of the whole that it was not thought worth while making a special demand on their account. If Lord Clanricarde will reduce all his rents even now to the judicial level, he may make peace.

(5) Lord Clanricarde describes the tenants whom he evicted as too hopeless defaulters. If his Lordship knew anything at all about his estates he would know this to be a gross calumny. No more punctual rent-payers were known among the serfs of Clanrackrent than Conry, Broderick, Fahy and Saunders. If Lord Clanricarde doubts this, let him go to the estate books at Loughrea and ascertain the facts for himself. Now I appeal to Sir Michael Hicks-Beach and his Attorney General whether it is tolerable that the forces of the Crown should be put in motion to enforce the mandate of a landlord who is either so absolutely ignorant of the facts of his own estate, or capable of such gross misrepresentation as that which I have just exposed.'

Eviction Memories from Shannonside

by Tom Page

Tom Page has had many conversations with the older people from the eastern half of Woodford parish adjoining Lough Derg on the Shannon, whose grandparents and neighbours still have ivid memories of the evictions. He has recorded much of the local lore, some of it from John Slattery, Clonmoylan, whose memory is particularly good in this regard.

- When Patrick Conroy was evicted from his house and farm at Kylenamelly in August 1886, he was sick in bed. The emergency men dismantled his bed, took him and the bed into the yard, put the bed back together and Conroy back into it.
- On the day of the Conroy eviction, Joyce, the Agent, carried a repeating Winchester rifle and kept it aimed at the roof throughout the eviction. He expected he would be fired at by those inside.
- Constable James Donohue identified Tommy Larkin as the person who scalded him with boiling water during the Saunders eviction.
- There is no evidence of any great animosity between the tenants and the police in the early days of the evictions. During the Conroy eviction, the leaders of the people said: 'Spare the police who did such good work for us in Belfast, but give it to the Orangemen'.
- During the eviction of James Broderick in Douras in 1886, the sub-sheriff, magistrates, and the District Inspector each gave £1, and the other policemen lesser amounts of money towards paying Broderick's rent, but, because he wouldn'nt pay arrears, he was evicted.
- Captain E.C. Hamilton of the Property Defence Association was very critical of the police, because of their lack of effort during the evictions. During the eviction of Patrick Fahy, Douras, the sub-sheriff had great difficulty in getting the policemen to act. Hamilton also complained that the policemen stood and laughed at the struggle between the emergency men and those inside 'Saunders' Fort'.
- There were some smaller landlords scattered in among the Clanricarde property. In Looscaun there was a landlord known as the Minor Burke, who had no dispute with his tenants and who later allowed evicted tenants to build huts on his property. Minor and his family are all now buried in the old cemetery beside the former Church of Ireland in Woodford.

- In Clonmoylan John Roche owned land. He had about 13 tenants and some of these tenants rented land from both Roche and Clanricarde. Therefore they could remain on their Roche land, even though they were evicted from the Clanricarde property. Roche had bought the land from Mr. Freer, a small landlord in the area, and later Roche allowed tenants to built huts on his property. One of these huts still stands on Quinn's farm in Clonmoylan. In this hut, which is still in near-perfect condition, the Burkes of Clondaguav lived for a time after their eviction. There was a shop there later owned by Mary Hallo-ran.

  The money to build these huts came from the Plan of Campaign fund. They were built of stone with galvanised roofs. Many of the tenants evicted from their lands in Rossmore and Kylenamelly moved into huts in Looscaun (across from Power's house). Thomas Saunders' family, evicted from Drummin, moved into Murray's barn at first. Twins were born to them in Murray's barn. Later the family moved to the Looscaun huts. Many of the families remained in these huts for a long time. Some spent up to thirty years in them before getting re-possession of their holdings. At first, things weren't too bad as the fund kept them going. They seem to have got a voucher or ticket for ten shillings per week. Later, however, things became very difficult for the families. At one stage Maud Gonne visisted the huts and gave 10 shillings to each family. *Note (See extract from Servant of the Queen: Maude Gonne's autobiography).* As a result of later hardship many of the children of these families emigrated.

- Many of the farms were taken over by planters after the evictions. In Martin Kenny's house in Clonmoylan, a planter named Buchanan from Tyrone took over. In what is now Martin Flanagan's holding, a man named Frank Walker took the farm. Thompson took Dr. Tully's house. Flower was the name of a planter who lived in what is now White's house in Kylenamelly. However, most of Rossmore and Kylenamelly seems to have been rented out to Howard in Eyrecourt, who grazed the land. Herdesmen took over some of the houses and they looked after the cattle for Howard. Jack Callinan was a herdsman who lived in Page's house in Rossmore, and Harris in the house from which James Callaghan was evicted in Shragh. Most of these planters and herdsmen were boycotted in the early years, and they had to get supplies from Portumna or even Birr. However, they were well protected by police. Buchanan in Clonmoylan wanted to win the favour of the people around there, and so he often gave the services of his bull free to all the neighbouring farmers. Later on the children of the planters attended the local national schools.

- The area was very densely populated at the time of the evictions. In Clonmoylan, for example, the following families were evicted: Patrick Kemple, Pat Noonan, Tom Gorman, Tom Kemple, James Maher, John Daly, James Lyons, John Slattery, Thomas Coughlan, Martin Kenny, Pat Kelly, Michael Gorman, Michael Quinn, John Kelly, Stanny Burke and his cottiers (Nicholas Dillon, Michael Glennon, Ferdy Carroll). This does not include John Roche's thirteen tenants, some of whom held no land from Clanricarde.

- Some of the planters were very progressive farmers and they introduced new farming methods such as the wheel plough. When Buchanan was leaving

Clonmoylan there was a sale of his goods, and his modern wheel plough was sold for £1, because the locals thought it was useless!

- When Finlay, the process server was shot in Woodford, the police conducted a huge investigation. He was shot with a breech-loading rifle and the police found out that the killer wore a corduroy trousers, as they found the spot where he had knelt down. However, nobody was charged with the killing, and the probable gunman moved to America temporarily, but returned later and was never even suspected or charged, despite the presence of "the Prime Informer" W.H. Joyce.

- Those arrested during the evictions had to do three main types of work in prison. John Slattery's grandfather, Joe, from Clonmoylan was only eighteen when he was arrested and imprisoned. He did three types of work in jail. He broke stones for the building of roads; he picked oakum and he made firelighters. Picking oakum was a tiresome job. The prisoners were given old ship ropes and they had firstly to separate the strands. Then they had to pluck each strand and collect these pieces which were sent back to the shipyards to be used in packing etc. They also had to cut large chunks of timber into small pieces, and soak these in a flammable liquid for the making of firelighters.

- John Slattery remembers his father telling of a sheebeen near their house in Clonmoylan. Their greatest customers were the policemen from the barracks nearby!

- Clanricarde excused his own treatment of his tenants by stating that his father on his deathbed, had got him to swear that he would take revenge on his tenants, for the manner in which they had treated his nominee at the Galway elections in 1872. Clanricarde therefore blamed his father's vindictiveness for his attitude to the tenants. However, Shaw leFevre M.P. states in his book "Combination and Coercion" that during a visit to Dublin, a man called to see him claiming to be the illegitimate son of the old Clanricarde and he vindicated his father. He told leFevre that the late Clanricarde had expressed great pleasure in being on good terms with his tenants. He said he would not believe that the statements of the legitimate? son were true.

Clanricarde Eviction Huts at Woodford.

Evictions on the Lewis Estate

Brookville
James Slattery
(Sub Tenants)
Pat Burke
John Murphy
Michael Murphy
Martin Walsh
Cecelia Barrett
Pat Donnelly
Margaret Barrett
Mary Leech

Mountain Park
Anne Power
Martin Fahy
James Noonan
Michael Devine
Patrick Moran

Cappagh
Patrick Moran
Fardy Moran

Ballygowan
Thady Meara
Brigid Murphy
Thomas Moran
Michael Mulkerin
Pat Flynn
John Kelly
Thomas Finn
John Shaughnessy
John Burke
Pat Burke

John Minogue Sr.
John Minogue Jr.
Michael Dolan
Patrick McDonagh
John Molloy
Martin Downey
Martin Mullin
Martin Fahy

Tomany
Thomas Tully

Druminamucla
Thomas Coen
Anne Coen
Winifred Coen
Michael Kennedy
Winifred Maguire
Martin Lynch
John Spaine
James Egan

Rosdurra
John Coen
William Stapleton
Thomas Broder
Maria Fahy

Abbeyville
Mary Forde
John Minogue
Catherine Mulkerrin
Michael Murray
Mary Murray
John Burke

Evicted Tenants on the Burke Estate

Woodford
Stephen Walshe
Francis Farrellk
John McCabe
John Egan

Ballinakill
Wido Cleary — Lagoo

Thomas Murray — Cuileen
Thomas Geraghty — Cuileen

Leitrim
Michael Shiel — Newtowndaly

Kilnadeema
Martin Sheehan — Knockash

Complete List of Evicted Tenants on the Clanricarde Estate

Joseph McDonagh
Honor White
Pat Whyte
Pat Goonan
Madgie Lahey
Peter Guerin
Thomas Touhy
James Maher
William Hickey
David Hickey
Matt Lennon
Peter Flanagan
Pat McDonnall
Mat Lyons
John Kennedy
Francis Glasby
Michael Fahy Sr.
Michael Fahy Jr.
Matthew Fahy
James Kennedy
Winifred Kenny
John Shiel
Matthew Donohue
John Mannion
Fergus Power
John Quinn
Catherine Mitchell
Peter Lynam
James Lynam
Martin Egan
William Diamond
Margaret Broder
Martin Campbell
Thomas Flynn
Brigid Connors
Winifred Purcell
Patrick Twohy
Thomas Minogue
Thomas Cunningham
John Carthy
Michael Shaughnessy
Martin Blake
John Lyons
John Williams
John Connors
Catherine Larkin
Margaret Hickey
Maria Moran

Catherine Madden
Laurence Kelly
Patrick Burke
Patrick Mannion
Mary Kelly
Thomas Hogan
John Molloy
Honoria Calligy
Timothy Clarke
Mary Mahon
Peter Flanagan
John Touhy
Julia Roonan
Edward Kennedy
Michael Gorman
James Ross
John Muldoon
Anne Cannon
John Kennedy
Patrick McDermott
Michael Hogan
Michael Starr
Thomas Finlay
Margaret Gleeson
Thomas Tuohy
Michael Shee
Pat Tuohy
John Cooney
Thomas Minogue
Martin Killeen
Catherine Bermingham
Michael Bermingham
John Mahon
Patrick Shaughnessy
John Molloy
Michael Kilacky
Patrick Lawlor
John Cleary
Catherine Kennedy
Andrew Madden
Patrick Kennedy
Maria Touhy
John Kelly
Patrick Kemple
Laurence Halloran
Mary Dillon
Mary Noonan
Patrick Daly

Brigid Tully
Thomas Mulvihill
Thomas Coughlan
John Power
James Meara
Thomas Goulding
John Keane
John Shiel
Briget Fahey
Eliza Callanan
Martin Touhy
Mary Kelly
Peter Flanagan
Mary Quinn
Brigid Barrett
John McCormack
John Healy
John Sheridan
Michael Tully
Patrick Holland
Patrick & John Cuniffe
Patrick Healy
Patrick Fahey
John Shiels
Winifred Kenny
Patrick Finnegan
James Hession
Patrick Healy
William Golden
Patrick Kennedy
John Donohue
Michael Halloran
James Hacket
Michael Clarke
John Flanagan
Patrick Conroy
Patrick Fahy
James Broderick
Thomas Saunders
John S. Burke
Anne Dillon
Michael Glennon
Fordy Carroll
Thomas Donnelly
Thomas Kemple
John Lennon
John White
John Flanagan

Pat Lyons (Frank)
Michael Dolphin
Mary Coen
James Lyons
Martin McGrath
Jonathan Fahey
Michael Hynes
Brigid Cunningham
Margaret Touhy
John Burke
Peter Connell
Nicholas Tracey
Catherine Hough
Thomas Lawlor
Laurence Solan
Brigid Tully
John Hogan
Pat Whyte
David Hickey
Thomas Torpey
Patrick Guerin
Thomas Whyte
John Mohan
Michael Coolhan
Peter Campbell
William Flannery
William Golden
Thomas Golden
William Moran
Michael Madden
Pat Scully
Thomas Goonan

Sarah Malone
John Hanly
Cornelius & Timothy Tully
Matthew Conroy
Michael Maggivan
Martin Hickey
Patrick Tarpey
Michael Fahey
John Fahey
Laurence Heaghey
John Heagney
Thomas Derivan
Patrick Gallagher
Patrick Fahey
Michael Hogan
Thomas Muldoon
Thomas Campbell
Thomas Fahey
Thomas Scott
Thomas Scully
John Culleen
Martin Donlon
Martin Fahey
John Madden
John Cahill
Brigid Tully
John Broderick
Pat Dermody
Matt Lennon
John Hickey
Patrick Tarpey

Catherine Malone
Patrick Fahy
James Williams
Martin Kenny
Thomas Canning
John Hayes
Edward Hynes
James Callaghan
Michael Quinn
Michael Page
John McDonagh
Joseph Stewart
Michael Page
Michael Shaughnessy
Maria Tully
Patrick Solan
Thomas Porter
John Fahey
Mat J. Page
Charles Clarke
Michael Mahon
John Slattery
Patrick Kelly
James Maher
Patrick Fahey
Thomas Touhy
Francis Tully
John Conroy
Eliza Flannery
John Donohue
Timothy Muldoon

Names of Those Arrested in 1886 (Shannonside, Woodford)

Arrests during Eviction in House of James Broderick, Douras 1886

Thomas Cunningham
Francis Fahy
Thos. Broderick
Owen Broderick
Simon Malone
James Broderick
Joseph Fahy
James Touhy
Michael Touhy
Matthew Conroy
Connor Gorman
Patrick Conroy
Patrick Connolly

Thos. Fahy (Pat).
Thos. Fahy
John McGrath
Matthew Dermody
James Conroy
John Dermody
Michael Fahy
John Tully
Cornelius Tully
Michael Tully
Patrick Goonan
Michael Mohan
John Spain
Patrick Finnerty

Arrests during Eviction in House of Thomas Saunders, Drummin 1886

Thomas Martin
Michael Foley
John Minogue
Michael Fahy (Derrygill)
Domnick Forde
James Touhy
Michael Fahy (Looscaun)
Michael Minogue
James Egan
Michael Colleran
Jeremiah Gorman
Thomas Larkin. (He was identified by Constable James Donohue as the man who scalded him).

Michael Fahy (Derryoober)
Michael Tarpey
Peter E. Callanan
Edward Hogan
Michael Callanan
Pat. Conroy (already evicted in Rossmore)
John Hickey
Pat. Tarpey
Michael Finnerty
Michael Moggavin
Thomas Page

(from information supplied by Tom Page & John Slattery)

MEN JAILED FOR DEFENDING HOUSES IN CLONMOYLAN AND LOOSCAUN (DOC TULLY'S)

Pat Keane
Michael Mulvilhill
Michael Kennedy
Marty Gorman
Sam Stanley
David Hickey
Bill Stanley

Pat Donohue
Pat Sheehan
Michael Duggan
John Tuohy
Michael Kildea
Pat Conroy
Francis Bowels
James Bowels
Doc Francis Tully
Pat Keane
Michael Mulvihill

Leading Campaigners

Among other active campaigners were Pat Bourke, Dromane House, Whitegate, Michael Holland, Whitegate, P. Larkin P.L.G., Lisheen, James Kennedy, P. Walsh and L. Broderick of Duniry, P. Gilligan and Martin Forde Co.C., Kilchreest, Thomas Tinie P.L.G. and John Scully, Abbey, Derrybrien, P. Sutton P.C., Nicholas Larkin, Michael Connors and Pat Larkin P.L.G. of Ballinakill. In Portumna were M. Stronge, John Morrissey Co.C., John Keary, Tom Burke, Joe Martin Co.C., Dan Burke, Michael Martin, Jas. Dillon P.L.G. and James Cosgrove M.P.

Active in Loughrea Town were Martin M. Egan, Peter Sweeney and Michael Kennedy all three of whom were evicted by Clanricarde. In addition to being evicted, Peter Sweeney, a Town Commissioner suffered imprisonment with hard labour. He was joined in jail by other Loughrea men including W.J. Duffy ex M.P., Peter Kelly, Chairman, G.A.A., P. Larkin, Co. Chairman G.A.A., John Sweeney T.C., John Farrell T.C., John McCarthy, Thomas Cunningham and others.

Police Stations (1889) (on the Clanricarde Estate)

An interesting map in the National Library in Dublin (15 A 23) gives details of all the police stations in S.E. Galway which in 1889 were responsible for the protection of Lord Clanricarde's agents bailiffs, 'emergency men' and 'planters' on evicted farms.

The major parcels of the estate were in the vicinity of Loughrea (including town), Portumna (including town), Woodford (not including town), a large isolated mountain pocket at Derrybrien and a small pocket at Craughwell. The main police stations were at Loughrea, Portumna and Woodford but there were a large number of smaller stations (including 'Special Protection' stations) particularly in the Woodford parish.

Loughrea had a police strength of 1 District Inspector, 5 sergeants, 4 Acting Sergeants and 24 Constables, (including 6 men protecting Mr. Tener, with 2 transport horses). Mr Tener, Clanricarde's main Agent, resided at Loughrea, but frequently went to Portumna on business, residing when there at Lord Clanricarde's house.

Portumna had 1 D.I., 2 Sgts., 1 Act. Sgt., and 21 Constables. This included 2 men protecting J. Whelan, Clanricarde Estate Agent.

Woodford had 1 D.I., 2 Sgts., 1 Act. Sgt., and 14 Constables.

The map shows the distances by road between the stations, and the density of the smaller stations in the Portumna - Woodford area is shown by the following itinerary: Portumna 4½ miles to Ballyshrule (sgt. + 7 Const.); 2½ miles B'shrule to Power's Court (1 Sgt. + 4 C), thence 3 miles to Woodford. From Woodford, 2 miles to Derrygill ('Special Post' with 3 Constables); 1 mile further to Looscaun (1 Sgt. + 6 C); 1½ miles Looscaun to Douras No. 1 at Douras Gate ('S.P.', 1 Sgt. + 4 C); thence 1½ miles to Douras No. 2 at Old Village ('S.P.', 2X.); Loosaun to Rossmore, 2½ miles (1 Sgt. + 6 C).

Other police stations with responsibility for Clanricarde protection were 'Cloondadauv' ('S.P.', 1 A/Sgt. + 3 C.); Whitegate (1 Sgt. + 4 C.), Tynagh (1 Sgt. + 7 C.), Duniry (1 Sgt. + 6 C.), Killimor (1 Sgt. + 9 C.), Derrybrien (1 Sgt. + 4 C.), Craughwell (1 Sgt. + 5 C.).

A particularly interesting feature of the map is that it indicates localities 'where dangerous characters more particularly reside' e.g. Loughrea Town, Woodford Town, Looscaun and Killimor.

Letter to the Editor

66, Mayorstone Pk.,
Limerick.
21.1.86.

Sir,

Being the last McDermott to be born in the parish of Woodford might enable me to make a contribution to you, in your endeavours to produce a book on that period.

My late mother was Julia Hogan of Gorteeny, and my father was the late Jack McDermott and through them a great deal of what happened was passed on to me. In a nutshell I am one of those who inherited involvement from both sides. When I was young, the topic of conversation amongst old people was the setting up of the "Infernal Machine" in Derrygoolin Mills, which was owned by my family.

The McDermott home was knocked, and on its site a new building was erected, known as Derrygoolin Lodge. The purpose of this building was accommodation for **gentry** who wished to go shooting on the mountain. Those shooting rights were leased through a Dublin firm of Auctioneers named Battersby-North. There is no doubting about the achievements and bravery of the men and women of Woodford. They fired the imagination of the Nation and the greatest tribute of all time was paid to them by the voters of North Kilkenny, when they elected Patrick McDermott to Westminster in that famous bye-election. This bye-election was caused by the death of Sir John Pope-Hennessy. John Roche, M.P. put forward Patrick McDermott's name for nomination but was rejected. Thanks to the efforts of John Roche, Patrick McDermott got the necessary backing to contest the election as an anti-Parnellite candidate, and the result of the Poll was a resounding win for McDermott - and Roche. Various reasons have been given for the official candidate's defeat, but my view is that John Roche or Patrick McDermott would have won a seat any place at that time.

Patrick McDermott resigned from Parliament on February 26 1902 and his successor was Joseph Devlin, better known as 'Wee Joe'.

Wishing you every success,
Yours sincerely
Sean McDermott

On Erin's Hills So Green

Sam Stanley

It was in the prime of harvest time, One morning bright and cool,
These Woodford boys so brave and true, went out to fight a duel.
To put down damn tyranny, their liberties they did stake
With crimson clouds before their eyes, Clanricarde's neck to break.

We fought with hearts and courage brave, determined for to win,
To free the land that gave us birth, and keep the tenants in,
So keep your powder dry, my boys, and rifles bright and clean
We'll stand together one and all, On Erin's hill so green.

Written by Sam Stanley Sr., during his imprisonment in Galway jail, after being arrested at the defence of Callaghans, now Mulvihills, at Shragh. Each day he composed a verse, which he whispered through a hole in the wall to his friend, David Hickey, Rossmore, who was arrested on the same occasion. Fifty years later, David still remembered some of the verses, and perhaps readers may be able to add another verse or two.

Upstairs Challenge

Saunders Fort and Mc. Dermotts Mills,
their names shall live in rime,
they taught a noble lesson then,
that eviction was a crime.

They held their humble homesteads,
with gallant heart and true,
and set a brave example,
of what Irishmen could do.

There are several verses missing here, connecting the general theme of the Woodford evictions, to the latter verses, describing the tactics employed in the onslaught on a house with two floors, causing a hot reception for the invaders below. Saunders Fort and Mc. Dermotts (above) would both fall into that category, hence the use of scaling ladders and forced entry through the roof, as can be seen clearly in 'Doc' Tully eviction photograph (Lawrence).

In through door and window frame,
they scrambled and they burst,
first in the competition game,
to see who'd be out the first.

Like rats on whom the trap was closed,
once possession they had got,
when through the floor a challenge posed,
in water boiling hot.

For thus they marched and counter-marched,
in measured martial tread,
but the grand effect was injured,
by the laughter overhead.

And when they threatened vengeance,
and shouted, swore and cursed,
came down the stairs a bold defence:
"you can go and do your worst".

I got these verses from Paddy Mannion, Tirenascragh, who has a wonderful repertoire of old ballads and whose father, John, played in the first All-Ireland Hurling Final of 1887 at Birr. In addition to collecting old ballads, verses and recitations, we would like to obtain any material about the brass and pipe bands of that era, especially photographs and the names of band members. Every parish had a band at that time, and they played a very active role in the events leading up to 'The Plan of Campaign'.

— Cathal Stanley.

Chronology of the Land War

(A)-Background Events **(B)-Phase I** **(C) Phase II**

(A) The Great Famine proved injustice of landlordism and feudalism.
1845-1847 Demise of cottiers, labourers, small farmers and many bankrupt landlords, led to big farmers and speculators at home, and embittered exiles abroad.
1848 James Fintan Lalor placed land question above Repeal of Union, and claimed that "all titles to land ownership belonged to the Irish people" while advocating organised combination and land war tactics.
1848 Encumbered Estate Act sold estates (3,000 to 7,200 purchasers by 1857), but new business-like owners worse than previous landlords. Thus 17,000 families (90,000 people) evicted in 1849 and 20,000 in 1850 (104,000 people).
1850-59 The Tenant League sought 3 Fs. and Ulster custom to be legalized, but Land Bill (1852) defeated, F. Lucas died, C.J. Duffy emigrated and failure.
1852-59 Independent Irish Party demanded land reforms, but divisions and and clerical opposition destroyed it, and paved way for violent means (Finians).
1860-1867- Deasy's Act confirmed landlord as absolute owner of the soil. Fenian Rising fails, but boosted by 'Manchester Martyrs' and Clerkenvell explosion and John Devoy as dynamic new leader.
1868- W.E. Gladstone elected Prime Minister on 'Justice for Ireland' for Ireland slogan.
1869-71 Disestablishment of Church of Ireland and anti-Union implications.
1870- Land Act legalized 'Ulster custom', with loans and compensation. Though in-effective, a landmark in state control of Rents, and relations between tenants and landlord, revoking the Deasy Act. I. Butt launches Home Rule Campaign.
1870-77 M. Davitt imprisoned (G.B.) and agricultural decline due to imports etc.

(B) Note Phase 1 of Land War (1872-1886)
early start of land agitation in East Galway, due to Clanricardes Raised Rents v tenant support of Bishop Duggan and Matt Harris, leading up to Land League (1872-79).
1872 Ballot Act and secret voting meant an end of landlord vote. After 'Portcarron Award' (recognition of dual ownership of land), Bishop Duggan, Clonfert, supports Capt. Nolan V. Trench of Garbally in East-Galway, election of successor to Lord Clanricarde M.P., who had resigned in protest (1871) against Land Act of 1870. Though later, unseated, Nolan's victory broke election-power of landlords.
1873 For supporting Nolan, Clanricarde raises Woodford rents in revenge, and has Bishop Duggan arrested. Convention act bans policital

organization. Fenians 'New Departure' (Devoy and Harris), supports Home Rule parliamentary approach as a way of ending landlordism.

1874 General election and birth of Butt's Home Rule Party.

1875 C.S. Parnell elected M.P. for Meath with Fenian support.

1876 Ballinasloe Tenants Defence Association founded by Matt Harris, and with a series of huge anti-landlord protests in East-Galway, laid the basis for the Land League.

1877 Further Tenants Defence meetings all over Connacht, organized by M. Harris and M.M. O'Sullivan, Ballinasloe and James Daly, Mayo. Davitt released and returns to home welcome, meeting Daly, and later Harris in Ballinasloe. House of Commins Committee of Enquiry into failure of Land Act purchase provisions, with G. Shaw Lefevre, Chairman, Parnell starts obstruction tactics in Westminister and Dillon joins Irish Party.

1878 (Feb.) Ulster reform proposals at Westminister, which Parnell fails to support.

1878 (June) Reports of Commons Committee urged state to provide help for tenants to buy farms, with Harris (witness) suggesting three quarters of four eights of purchase price (later to be baisis of effective Land Acts).

1876-79 Poor harvests, imports and falling prices cause agricultural disaster and famine.

1879 Davitt's Irishtown meeting (April) and Westport (June) with Parnell. Death of I. Butt and Repeal of Convention Act (1879) to allow political organization. Knock apparitions (Sept.) and founding of 'The Irish National Land League' (Oct.) in Dublin by M. Davitt. Parnell as new leader of Irish Party in Commons, elected President.

1880 Davitt at Loughrea meeting (Jan.) and East-Galway L.L. Branches organized rapidly by Harris, O'Halloran, Griffin and clergy. Gladstone returns as Prime Minister after Gen Election. Parnell meets Kitty O'Sgea after return from U.S.A. with John Dillon.

1881 Jury disagrees over Land League prosecution (Jan.) and coercive response of British Gov. with protection of Persons and Property Act (March). Land Act (August) provides 3Fs., rent courts, recognizes dual ownership of land (Portcarron) and need for a Land Commission. Land League leaders arrested (Oct.) 'No Rent' Manifesto, (Parnell) leading to agrarian agitation and violence, as Land League is suppressed. Parnell'd Nationalist candidate in Tyrone revives Catholic v. Protestant hostile factions in Ulster.

1882 (May 2) Parnell's child born to Mrs. O'Shea (Feb.) hence "Kilmainham Treaty", or Parnell's sell-out of Davitt and Dillon's land policies to attain release from jail, obscured by Phoenix Park murders on 6th May. Dillon resigns, despite Arrears Act and Land Reduction Courts. Parnell founds Irish National League (Oct.), ignoring Davitt's new land proposals and Dillon emigrates. Shaw Lefervre visits Clanricarde estate after his agent, Blake shot in Loughrea, and likewise W.J. Burke, previously, near Gort.

1883-84 Good years for tenant farmers generally, but high rents by Clanricarde, H. Lewis and H. Burke and Dunsandle, etc. caused more

agitation in South East-Galway, especially around Woodford, where National League branch formed in **February 1884.**

1885 Drop in agricultural produce (crops, stock and dairy) leads to appeal to Bishop Healy (Auxiliary to Clonfert's Duggan) whose letter to Clanricarde was ignored, hence Portumna tenants protest and Ballinakill's National League Branch (Nov.) General Election, Monster protest V. Lewis at Ballynagar House **(December 6)** as Finlay serves ejectment decress for Lewis and Burke. Letter to Clanricarde and Woodford's John Roche refused support by National League in Dublin **(December 28)** and forms Local Tenant Defence Association in Woodford, with Defence Fund as in Ballinakill (Plan of Campaign idea).

1886 Irish and Liberal M.P.s put Conservatives out of Government **(January)**, as Woodford appeals to 'Exiles' for vital support. Loughrea tenants pay Clanricarde and agent Joyce proceeds against Eyrecourt, Portumna and Woodfort tenants, trying to buy out large tenants, McDermott, Clarke, Burke etc. as tactic **(February)** H. Burke evicts F. Farrell and J. McCabe, Allendarra, and S. Walsh, Woodford. Galway mutiny v. Parnell's election candidate (Capt. O'Shea) and party split henceforth, as Parnell lose support of Dillon, Harris and land leaders in the West. **March 3** — James 'Balaclava' Finlay, process-server shot dead by Fenians near Woodford (Derrycrag), and investigation by William 'Hangman' Joyce, (See O Broin's Prime Informer), with immense publicity and ante-Home Rule attacks by Ulster Unionists. Joyce's ejectment decress for Clanricarde quashed by court technicality. **April** —Gladstone's Home Rule Bill introduced in Parliament. W.S. Blunt intervenes with H. Burke, who employs the Property Defence Association on Marble Hill estate. **May** — Woodford mock funeral of 'Landlordism', as Clanricarde urges Joyce to act against 'terrorists'. Tenants penniless after prices fall again. **June** —Home Rule Bill defeated, as Burke's special baliffs return to Dublin after rents paid with 15% reduction. **July** — Conservative Goverment re-elected and promise support to landlords, so Joyce applies for eviction party from Hicks-Beach (Secretary). **August 18** — Arrival in Portumna of small army, and Woodford warned of the worst at annual 'Races'. **August 19** — Monakeba Bridge down as army proceed to Kylenamelly and evict Pat Conroy.

Aug. 20 Patrick Fahy, Dooras, evicted; local police intervene for first time.

Aug. 21 James Broderick evicted; 27 men arrested and sent to Galway Jail.

Aug. 20 First attempt on Thomas Saunders' eviction fails.

Aug. 21 Second attempt to evict Saunders also fails.

Aug. 26 Capt. E.C. Hamilton, P.D.A. arrives in Portumna 'with ladders and other appliances considered necessary'. Eviction planned for 26th, but postponed to await arrival of 200 soldiers.

Aug. 26 Police reinforcements, 200 soldiers and '30 barrels of porter' arrive in Portumna.

Aug. 27 Eviction party of 1,000 men captures 'Saunders' Fort'; 22 men arrested.

Aug. 28 Evictions at Druminamucla at Spain's, Thomas Coen's and Widow Coen's, followed by Egan's, Kelly's and Carthy's after more resistance (Lewis tenants).

Aug. 29 Looscaun meeting of tenants; actions praised by Fr. Coen P.P., Woodford.

Sep. 12 Trial of Fr. Fahy C.C., Ballinakill in Woodford court for alleged threat to J.P. Lewis, Ballinagar House; sentenced to 6 month's jail; 18 men arrested after trial on Fair Day.

Sep. 13 Fr. Fahy met in Galway by rescue party of 4,000, but walks willingly to jail to avoid injury to escorting supporters.

Sep. 14 18 prisoners arrive in Galway; rescue attempt by huge crowd attacking police and the Jail; (many are wounded).

Sep. 25 12 prisoners released from Galway Jail and, after defiant walk to Loughrea, are driven triumphantly to Woodford for tumultuous welcome with bands and speeches (N. League Hall). Meanwhile, eviction huts erected by Woodford Tenants' Defence Association, helped by other East Galway groups.

Sep. 27 to Oct. 16 National press coverage of Woodford evictions as 'Saunders' Fort' becomes rallying cry of Irish tenants who resolve 'to emulate the effective National spirit of the Woodford tenants'. ('United Ireland' Oct. 16). Dublin Castle upset by world reaction to Woodford events and Hicks Beach (Chief Secretary) forces Clanricarde after meeting Agent Joyce to offer 20% reduction of rent.
Woodford T.D.A. refuse 'absurb' offer, and organize the local community into a unique 'Irish Commune' (P.M. Gazette).
John Roche appeals to Dillon and O'Brien to support their constitutional policy personally or crime might result locally.
Defeat of Parnell's Tenant Relief Bill (after previous defeat of Home Rule Bill) sees Parnell's decline and change in attitude of National League. Central Branch now to support land agitation. Leaders invited to National demonstration in Woodford.

Oct. 17 1886 Sunday Plan of Campaign promulgated in Woodford to crowd of 4,000 including M.P.s Dillon, O'Brien, Harris and Sheehy. Fr. Coen P.P. presides and reads letter of support from Bishop Duggan enclosing £100 for the evicted. Reinstatement of evicted tenants made a condition, with support from Abbey, Duniry and Ballinakill confirmed.

Oct. 26 Tenants' offer to purchase holdings is rejected by Clanricarde; 'Plan' is adopted by East Galway tenants after speeches by Dillon and Harris.

Nov. 5 Loughrea meeting of Clanricarde tenants; Dillon advises organisation of small committees in six divisions - Loughrea, Portumna, Woodford, Craughwell, Meelick and Galway, and formation of central committee to pursue 'No Rent' campaign.

Nov. 12 Woodford T.D.A. meeting applies 'Plan' on Clanricarde estate ('Western News') and implements Dillon's advice on small committees and central action committee.

Nov. 18 Portumna tenant's meeting and estate committee of T.F. Burke, E. Maloney, M. Dillon, M. Fahy and J. Williams demand 40% reduction from agent Joyce, but are refused. 400 tenants pay rents less 40% to Dillon and O'Brien in local hotel.

Dec. 14 Ballinagar rents (Lewis) paid less 50% to trustees of Plan of Campaign

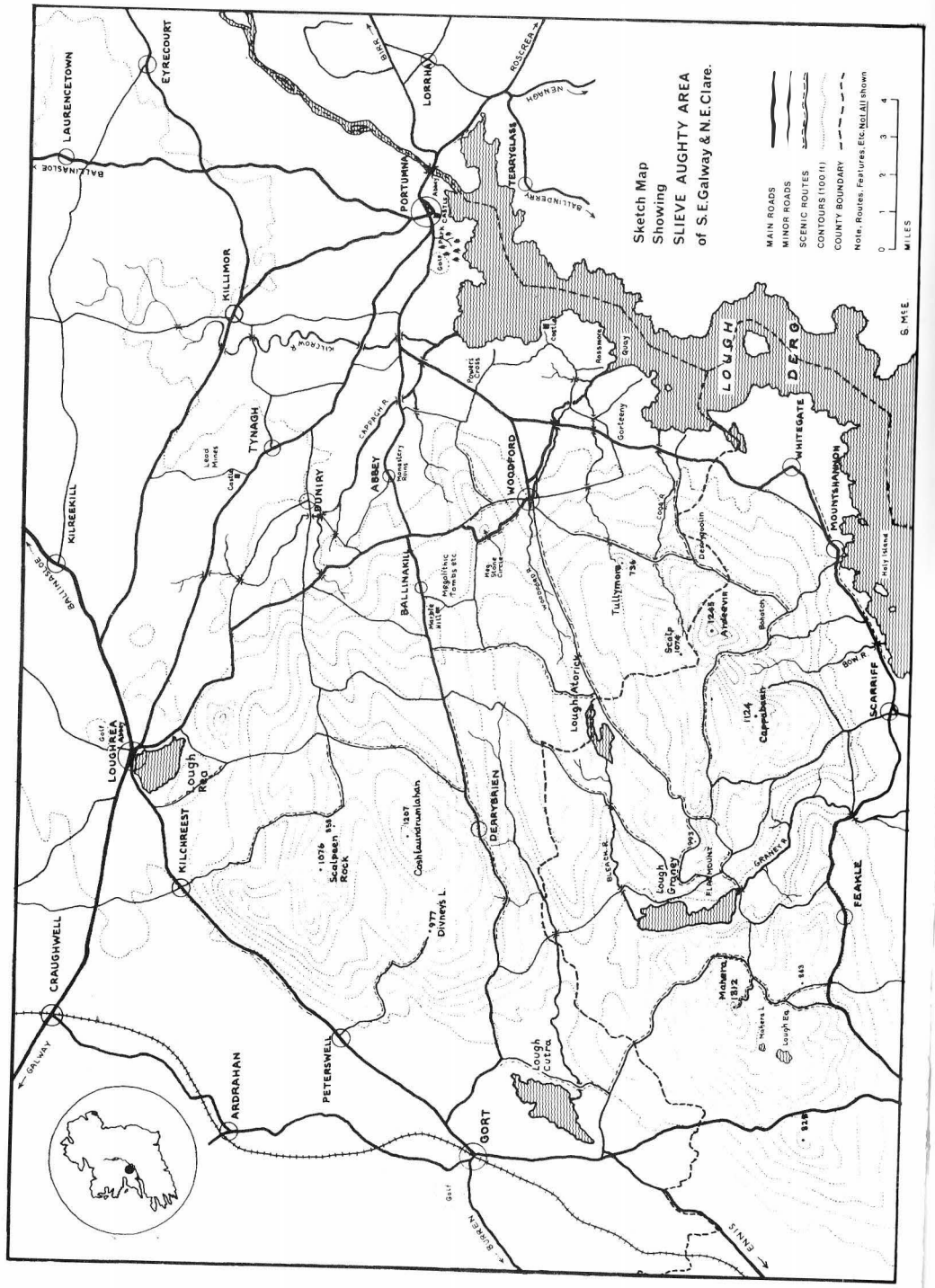
Dec. 16 Loughrea rent offices (4) set up and named by Dillon, O'Brien, Harris and Sheehy, but all are arrested and sent to Bridewell in Loughrea.

Dec. 17 Plan of Campaign outlawed as criminal conspiracy by Govt. and driven underground. However, with changed tactics, it still remained effective.

Dec. 29 75 Woodford men on trial at Sligo for resisting local evictions.

1887
Jan. 5 All found guilty by packed jury (Peter the Packer) and sentenced to terms of twelve to eighteen months in jail with hard labour by Chief Baron Palles, these included Tommy Larkin, later to die in Kilkenny Jail (Sept. 18th 1887).

NOTE: the next volume will take up from 1886 to 1891, and deal with the operation of The Plan of Campaign, hence the chronology ends in 1886 above.



The Geology of South-East Galway and East Clare

by Raymond Keary

About 350 or 400 million years ago the oldest rocks round around the South-East Galway area were formed. They are slate and gritstone (muddy fine-grained sandstones) of Silurian age which are found in the highest parts of Sliabh Aughty. They also occur to the south, and were quarried as the famous Killaloe slates up to some years ago. These rocks were laid down in a sea which covered the area and, having been buried under a great depth of sediment for a long time, they were folded up into mountain chains which ran from South-west to North-east. Many of the mountains of Ireland, Scotland and Scandinavia still show this directional trend and date from this time.

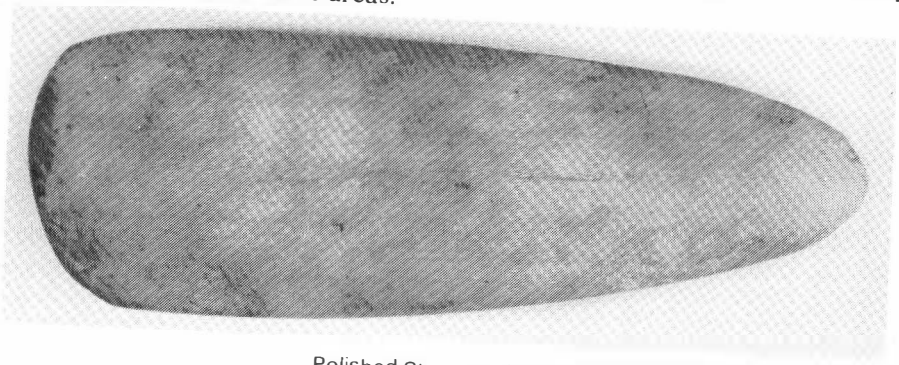
When this mountain land was formed above the sea it began to erode under the influence of wind, rain, frost and gravity. There was little or no vegetation to form soil and hold the surface together, so the eroded material was washed and blown downhill and formed a desert-like landscape covered with sand, pebbles and small stones. There may have been occasional short-lived lakes on which fish, shellfish, scorpion-like animals and primitive ferns depended. Such fossil species have been found in other parts, but not in Slieve Aughty. The particles of which sandstone is made are mainly quartz which is the most durable and common mineral and also contain other minerals which indicate the type of landscape from which they were derived. For example, at Gortnamearacaun, not far from Feakle, there is a lot of jasper in the sandstone which indicates that the area from which it came had a large amount of volcanic rocks. These are rocks of the Devonian age which were also called the Old Red Sandstone. This name can be misleading because they are not always red; they may be yellow, purple, brown or even green and they are very often not sandstones! The particles of which they are made can often be as big as ones fist. Most of the field walls and many houses around Woodford are constructed from this rock, which was once quarried on the Ben Hill and at a number of other sites in the area.

While the sandstone was being laid down on land, the sea was found to the south of Ireland, covering the south of England and much of Europe. This sea gradually covered the land to its north and most of Ireland was submerged. Some mountain areas remained above sea level as islands - the Wicklow mountains and possibly some areas in North Connaght and Donegal for example. In this sea, which was shallow and warm, new life forms evolved, mainly animals with limey skeletons or shells. When they died, their hard parts fell to the sea floor and formed limestone. Some limestones are very clean and formed almost entirely of fossil fragments. This type can be found along the Shannon shore at Rossmore. Other limestones are fine-grained and muddy and when broken with a hammer give out a smell of decay. This smell is produced by the remains of small creatures which died and were buried over 250 million years ago. The accumulation of sediment on the sea floor was so rapid that complete decomposition was not possible before the remains were buried in the mud. When the rock is broken and exposed to the air, decomposition resumes and the smell is

released. This is the Carboniferous Limestone which overlaps with the Old Red Sandstone and forms the basis of most of the best land in the county, including the area along the Shannonside below Woodford. If one goes to the top of the Ben Hill and looks north, one is standng on the older Old Red Sandstone and looking out over a plain of the newer Limestone.

In some areas, such as much of the southern part of County Clare, sandstones were laid over the limestones as the seas became shallower, but there is no evidence that rocks of this type (the famous Clare Flagstones) were ever laid down in the Woodford area.

After this, the sea got even shallower, swamps developed and vegetation of a very primitive fern-like type became common. These plants eventually formed coal seams in some areas.



Polished Stone Axehead.

About 250 million years ago the surface of much of the Earth underwent major movements. These, the Armorican or Hercynian movements were centred in Europe, far to the south of Ireland. However, the present east-west tending hills which are obvious in counties Cork and Kerry represent their effects. The faults which cut the Slievie Aughty area, including the famous Tynagh fault, occurred at this time. The steep slope of Lacken Hill represents one of these faults. On the top of the hill one is on Old Red Sandstone which has been pushed up by the movement. At the bottom, one stands on the newer Limestone. Near Loughrea Lake, at the old quarry, by the lorry-loading ramp (now disused) on the Woodford road, one can see how the limestone beds were bent by the earth movements. Tracks, or scores, on the surface of one bed show how the rock layers were pushed over one another.

From approximately 250 million years ago to about one million years ago there was no major geological activity in the Woodford area as far as we know at present. Then, about one million years ago the last major event, geologically speaking, in the history of the Woodford area began. This was the Pleistocene Glaciation or Ice Age. It lasted until about 20,000 years ago and was mainly responsible for the present surface features.

All of Ireland and the greater part of Europe was covered with ice. This may have been several thousand feet in thickness. It did not just sit still. At the bottom of the ice mass melting took place which lubricated the ground surface. The ice slipped downhill, split, refroze and during this process it carried pieces of earth and stones around, depositing them in some places, scoring the

ground, smoothing the hill slopes and generally changing things around. Rivers flowed under the ice, carrying their load of sand and gravel which were deposited when the power of the current was reduced. Sand pits are now commonly sited in these sand deposits. There are a number of places called "Esker" or with "gainimh" in their name, meaning that they have deposits of this type. Over much of the Woodford area during this period, a layer of soil, stones and rock was laid down covering most of the rock outcrop. They were not moved very far. Most of the material lying around is sandstone such as is found locally. Little limestone has been carried up to the sandstone. This indicates that the ice was coming from the higher part of the mountain towards the lowlands. In some other parts of the country rocks were carried long distances. A piece of granite from Connemara has been found near Mallow in Co. Cork and it is easy to pick out bits of the same Connemara granite on beaches of the Clare coast at, for example, Lahinch. Connemara was mostly scored to bare rock by the ice, unlike Slieve Aughty.

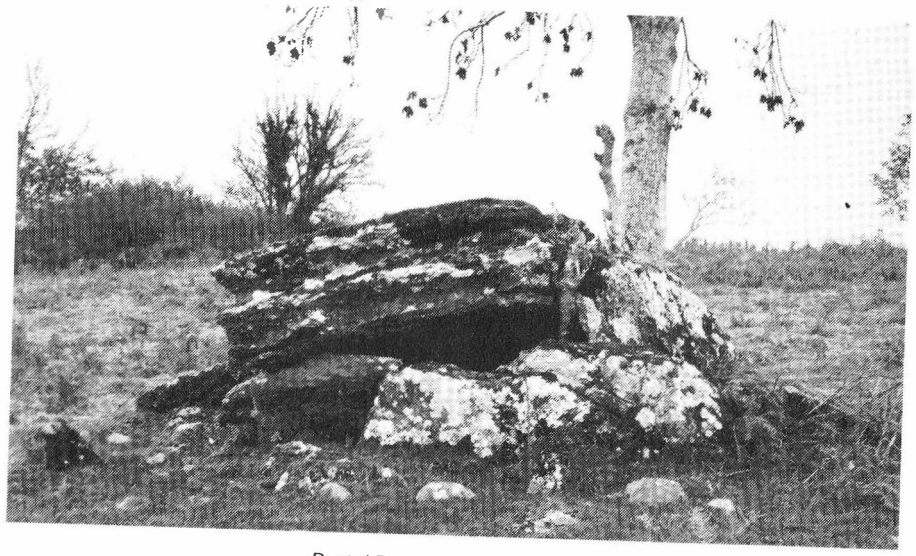
As the ice melted, the temperature improved and the vegetation began to advance northwards again. People followed the ice and the climate continued to improve until Bronze Age times when Finn McCool and the Fianna were around. The land was largely wooded at that time. Thereafter, the climate began to disimprove again and the bog began to grow, giving us the county we know at present.

By Aughty's Slopes

by Michael Mac Mahon

The south-eastern extremity of Co. Galway comprising the Catholic parishes of Woodford, Abbey-Duniry and Ballinakill was, in olden times, a distinct territory or *tuath* known by the tribal name of *Cineál Féichín*. The name is said to derive from association with St. Féichín who, according to tradition, built the first church in the district; he is commemorated to this day by a burial ground and holy well on the borders of Lackan and Wellpark at the foot of Benmore. In the church organisation of the medieval period *Cineál Feichín* became a separate rectory (parish) in the ecclesiastical deanery of Duniry; and the integrity of its ancient boundaries is preserved in those of the modern civil parish of Ballinakill. This territory comprises some 59,000 acres in the barony of Leitrim, between Lough Derg and the eastern outliers of the Aughty mountains. Together with the old parishes of Clonrush and Iniscealtra, now in Co. Clare, this district forms the southern part of the barony of Leitrim. Roughly it extends from the Owenaganny river on the southern border of Duniry parish to the Clare border near Coos Bay.

The Slieve Aughty range occupies a large aggregate area to the south and west. This mountainous region begins, according to O'Donovan (O.S. Letters: Co. Galway), at Cuppanagh in Killeenadeema parish and extends to Tomgraney in Co. Clare. The river Grian which flows out of Lough Graney and falls into Lough Derg marked its southern boundary. This is the *Grian-Eachta* mentioned in Ó Dubhgáin's topographical poem as forming the southern boundary of Uí Mháine, one of the ancient states of Connacht; and in 1536 the **Four Mas-**



Portal Tomb at Marble Hill.

ters speak of the territory of Uí Mháine (Hymany) as extending from 'Caraidh (near L. Ree) to Grian'.

In a 14th century manuscript in the Royal Irish Academy there is preserved a Rent Roll for *'Tuath-Eachta'*, a territory comprising the greater part of the celebrated mountain of Slieve Aughty, from which it takes its name. However, as O'Donovan points out, in no other authority is it mentioned as a distinct territory, and it remains in a twilight zone whose boundaries are tantalisingly blurred in the obscure topography of Ossianic tales. A manuscript (H.2 16), in Trinity College contains a poem attributed to Flann Mac Lónáin, one of the **Ollaves** of Connacht: *"Aobhinn Aobhinn Eachtge Árd"*.

"Delightful, delightful the lofty Eachtge
Habitation of the Fianna of sharp blades
Lands which the sons of Erc used to frequent
'On dark mornings about Lough Derg.
The Digna of Eachtga, meeting place of Finn
To me in a poem Finn told
There was not before me, there was not after me
One more skilled in the narration
Illustrious were the two women who loved it
And who frequented this rough mountain
Eachtga the daughter of robust Deaghaidh
And...daughter of Lodan".

How Slieve Aughty Got Its Name

In the **Dinnseanchas** the following derivation is given of the name of the mountain:-

'From Eachta, the daughter of Urscothach, one of the Tuatha De Dananns. She was fostered near Lough Ree. A famous warrior named Fergus, who was

cup-bearer to the king of Connacht, asked her hand in marriage. The daughter consented in consequence of the land which he held by right of his office of cup-bearer. He held no stock or wealth, however, only the land, but she had wealth but no land. She came to him with her cows and he gave up the mountain to her. Two cows were brought hither on this occasion and, although they were equally productive at the time of their arrival, the cow placed on the north side of the mountain did not yield one-third as much milk as the one placed at the south side'.

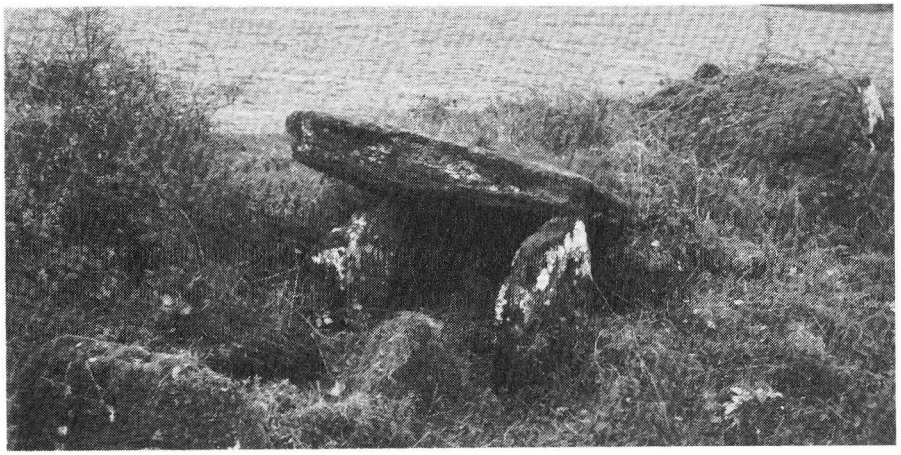
There are some curious echoes of this tale in the folklore of Derrynamucka, where there is a place called Loughalee ('lake of the calves'). It is related that Maeve, Queen of Connacht, had two calves which escaped and were drowned in the lake.

Lough Graney

Traditionally the Aughty hills were said to have seven peaks. There are also some pleasant lakes in the valleys. Amongst them is Lough Graney, the locale of Brian Merriman'ss famous poem, **The Midnight Court:-**

"Loch Graney lifts my soul for joy
Such land! such country! what a sky!
How silently the mountains rest
Their heads upon each others breast".

But the country is rolling heather upland rather than mountain, and the most striking physical feature of the region lies to the east, namely the broad expanse of Lough Derg. This is the last and loveliest of the Shannon's lakes, and embraces a twenty five mile stretch of countryside between Portumna and Killaloe. Backing the shoreline is a pleasant intermix of undulating hills and forestry plantations. Daphne Pochin Mould in her book, **The Mountains of Ireland,** notes that Derry placenames are frequent, and "there seems to have been an immense oak wood covering the Slieve Aughty area down to Tudor times. One cause of its felling is to be found in the slag heaps of old iorn furnaces that are to be found along the shore of Lough Derg".



Wedge Tomb at Marble Hill.

Lewis, writing in 1837 (**Topographical Dictionary of Ireland**) gave the following notice of Woodford:-

"....About 60 years ago an extensive iron foundary was carried on here. Iron ore is supposed to exist extensively in the neighbouring mountains, and evidence of old iron works may still be seen, adjoining the town, where there is a stratum of cinders from three to four feet deep".

A more expanded account of the place was written some eight years later in the **Parliamentary Gazetteer:-**

"Woodford: A village in the parish of Ballinakill, barony of Leitrim, Co. Galway. It stands on the Woodford rivulet and on the road from Loughrea to Mountshannon, eight miles south-west of Portumna and ten south-east of Loughrea. The portions of the vale and screens of the Woodford rivulet wich adjoins it, are largely enriched with wood; and the country lying immediately to the west and south climbs speedily into the acclivities, and towards the summits, of the Slieve Auchta mountains. The village contains a church, a Roman Catholic chapel, a national school, a bridewell, a small courthouse, a constabulary barrack, and a loan fund. A court of petty sessions is held once a fortnight...A Roman Catholic parish takes its name from Woodford and has chapels here and at Cloncoe. Area of the village 35 acres, population in 1841 was 396. Houses 68. Families employed chiefly in agriculture 27; in manufactures and trade, 39.

The District in Pre-History

"The footprints of an ancient race are here
And memories of an old heroic time
And shadows of an old mysterious faith
So that the place seems haunted, and strange
Sounds float in the wind".

We have no written records that tell us when precisely man first came to inhabit this disrtict. We have, however, sufficient evidence to indicate that he was here for several thousands of years before the coming of St. Patrick. In 1931 turf-cutters at Stoneyisland bog on the eastern borders of the parish unearthed a neolithic (c.3,000 B.C.) skeleton in the marle some 12 feet below the surface. It is now deposited in the Archaelology Department of Galway University.

One of the great attractions of the parish is the number of pre-historic remains which still abounds, though many are now, sadly, in a much damaged condition. The remains, for the most part, consist of burial tombs ranging from the Neolithic to the Late Bronze Age (about 1,000 B.C.). They are described as **megalithic,** which means 'of great stones', as they are frequently constructed with stones of massive size and weight. The tombs were associated with ritual and death and are well represented throughout the country. They have been invested with much popular folklore and superstition and, in the past, have been thought to be 'Druids' Altars or the beds of Diarmuid and Gráinne of the Fianna. They were, in fact, the burial tombs of successive generations of Stone Age farmers.

Irish megalithic tombs fall into four main classes: court-tombs, portal-tombs

(dolmens), wedge-tombs and passage-tombs. The wedge-tomb, of which there are some 400 examples known in Ireland, is the most common tomb type in the western part of the country; and the greatest concentration of these in Co. Galway is in Ballinakill. The Ordnance Surveyors of the last century recorded no fewer than eight megalithic tombs in the townland of Marblehill in the old Burke demesne. Unfortunately, some of these have been obliterated due to land reclamation and other cuases, but the surviving tombs together with plans and photographs will be found in vol. 3 of **The Survey of the Megalithic Tombs of Ireland (1972).** A well preserved wedge-tomb (Photo No. 2), stands in the meadow about half-a-mile east of Marble Hill House and has easy access from the road running south-wards through the demesne to Moyglass. The tomb has suffered considerable damage, but it is still regarded as an excellent example of its class and of the remarkable architecture of pre-history.

Stone Circle at Commons East (Rea).

Stone Circle at Commons East:

About 1½ miles north of Woodford village and about 150 metres to the east of the Woodford/Loughrea road, is a curious ring of seven free-standing stones. In the local folklore the stones are said to mark the graves of seven soldiers of Sarsfield's army, who came here, exhausted, on the way from Aughrim and died on the spot. The circle has a well-defined entrance on the eastern perimeter, between two stones 1.5m apart. These are the tallest stones in the circle, measuring 0.90m and 0.70m respectively. Apart from the entrance pair, the stones are quite evenly spaced - a feature which would appear to be a deliberate element in the design.

These stones belong to the class of prehistoric monuments known as Stone Circles of which Stonehenge in England is perhaps the best-known example. Although much less imposing than Stonehenge they show a strong family resemblance.

Purpose of Stone Circles?

A Stone Circle, as the name implies, is a setting of stones, roughly circular in plan, which has no apparent practical function apart from defining the area enclosed. Suggestions as to the possible functions of the circles are numerous,

and at least one archaeologist has sought to demonstrate that they are accurately aligned on significant astronomical events. It is established, for the finds from excavated sites have been consistently disappointing. The meagre evidence available indicates that the monuments belong to the Bronze Age and that they served a ceremonial or ritual function. Indeed, it has been suggested that elements in this 'circle ritual' are observeable today in the 'rounds' performed at holy wells.

In a survey of 79 stone circles in the Cork-Kerry region it was noticed that the main axes of the circles were consistently aligned on a sunrise aspect of the heavens; and this lends some support to the belief that the ritual may have been connected with the religious celebration of important days in the solar year.

In his book **Early Irish History and Mythology,** O'Rahilly makes the interesting suggestion that the simplest way of symbolising the sun in ancient times was by means of a circle or ring. One of the attributes of the sun-god was the healing of diseases and, so, great importance was attached to solar emblems. He argues also that the old Irish word, *ánne*, later *fáinne* (a ring), was a diminutive of Ianos the name of the Sun-god.

The Stone Circle at Commons East has certain affinities with the monument known as 'The Masonbrook Ring', in Moanmore East townland near Loughrea. This monument is essentially a circular earthen bank with seven large stones set radially on its perimeter. Apart from these two examples, few stone circles are known in Connacht.

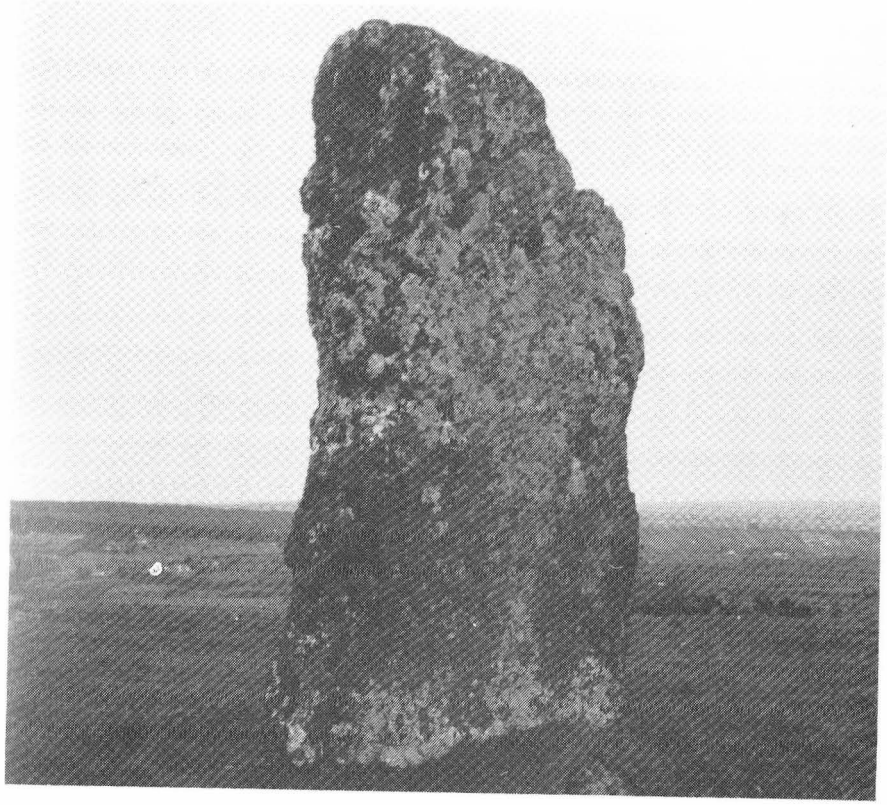
Another curious monument discovered in recent years in Cartron South, near Ballinakill church, and initially believed to be a Stone Circle, is now thought to be a kerb of a denuded cairn or burial mound. The kerbs or revetments of such cairns are difficult to distinguish from true Stone Circles; and indeed, are sometimes marked 'Circles' on the Ordanance Survey maps.

Standing Stone at Knockroe:

On the highest eminence in the townland of Knockroe, a curious standing stone keeps a lonely vigil. It measures some 7½ feet high and seems to have been deliberately erected in the centre of a flat portion of the summit, which also has traces of a low bank around its circumference. It is marked 'fearbreige' (meaning a figure repesenting a man) on the Ordnance Survey (6") sheet No. 125.

Single standing stones are often referred to as *galláns*, *dalláns* and *liagáins*. Placenames often reflect the presence of these stones and there is a townland called Leegaun in Killeenadeema parish. For all its simplicity of form, the standing stone is recognised as an important element in our field monuments. Excavation has shown that in some cases standing stones mark the sites of ancient burials and they served the same purpose as the modern gravestones. But others clearly were not erected for that purpose and the secret of their function remains locked in the stones themselves. Some are said to have served as ancient boundary marks of *tuathas* or of churchlands, but there is no definite evidence that this was the primary purpose of their erection and they may well have served an entirely different purpose in earlier times.

It is reasonably clear that some standing stones, because of their presence at important ancient sites fulfilled a ceremonial or sacred function. We are told that the pagan Irish kings were crowned at Tara beside the magical stone



Standing Stone at Knockroe.

known as the *Lia Fáil*, and the presence of tall stones beside the inauguration sites at Mágh Adhair, Co. Clare, and at Cornfree, Co. Roscommon emphasises the ceremonial purpose of the stones. It is almost certain that some ornamented stones such as the Turoe Stone, near Loughrea, were objects of veneration.

Ringfort at Lissaniska:

Surviving remains from the later pre-historic or early historic times are more often from habitation sites rather than burial sites. The most common field monument in the earthen ringfort, (sometimes constructed of stones). In its simplest form, the ringfort is a small circular area protected by an earthen bank with a ditch on the outside. The area enclosed varied considerably in size but a diameter of about 25m. is average. Sometimes added protection was provided in the form of a palisade of pointed wooden stakes driven into the top of the enclosing bank around its entire circumference. These structures provided a reasonable degree of protection for the owner and his family, and sometimes probably for his domestic animals. One or two houses, usually made of clay and wattle, were erected inside the enclosure; and it is common as well to find a short souterrain or underground passage - these were used mainly for storage purposes and also, perhaps, as places of refuge in times of danger. Colloquially

the ringforts were known by a variety of names, **rath, lios, dun, cathair, etc.** In some parts of the country they were known as 'fairy forts' and, until recent times, regarded with great awe and superstition. It is possible that this springs from the confusion of some ring forts with the more or less similar structures known as 'Children's Burial Grounds' or 'Killahauns'.

Ringfort at Lissaniska, Ballinakill.

Crannóg at Ballinlough:
Another protected homestead in ancient times was the crannog or Irish lake dwelling. The name derives from *crann*, a tree, as the houses were built mainly from timber and located on an artificially constructed island in a lake, marsh or bog. The use of island dwellings was frequent in Ireland and they are often referred to in the historical records.

The lake at Ballinlough contained three islands until in 1890 it became inundated by bog slippage. An entry in the **Annals of the Four Masters** states that John De Burgo had a lake dwelling there as late as 1580. It is also claimed locally that there are traces of a former crannog in Loughatorick Lake.

The Medieval Parish of Ballinakill

by P.K. Egan, P.P.

The civil parish of Ballinakill contains the Catholic parishes of Abbey, Woodford and Ballinakill, but not Derrybrien which was part of the civil parish of Killinadeema. These civil parishes were the pre-Reformation church parishes. That of Ballinakill represented a very early sub-territory of the kingdom of Hy Many. Its northern boundary was the river running from Ballinasack to Duniry, known in days gone by as the Owenaganny river, and it extended southwards to Lough Derg and the Clare border. This was Cinél Féchín, called after the sept which occupied it, descendants of Cairbre Mac Féichine, chief of Hy Many for twenty-six* years, father of Brénainn Dall who died in 601, and of Aedh Guaire.

Ballinakill appears in the earliest list of parishes in 1306 under the name of Kenaloyn.† The inclusion of such a large area in one parish means, probably, that it covered the large area of land held in fee by John de Cogan under de Burgo. Down to the 17th century, when the iron smelting and export of timber

changed the face of the countryside, it had been largely under forest. After 1807 it was divided into Woodford and Ballinakill which became a joint parish with Duniry. This arrangement stood until 1858 when portion of Ballinakill under the name of Abbey was united to Duniry as a separate parish and Derrybrien, the southern portion of Killinadeema, was in return united to Ballinakill.

* *Michael MacMahon's article "By Aughty's Slopes" refers to a St. Feichin. There is a Tobar Feichin in the vicinity. [Ed.]*

† *Note the different spellings from different sources as quoted in this article.*

In 1306 there was both a rectory and vicarage of Kinaloyn. The rector was the Carthusian prior and convent of Kinaloyn. Its value was £6.13s.4d., while the vicarage was valued at 27s4d., then regarded as sufficient yearly support for a priest. The convent was established to John de Cogan who would have had the right of presentation to the rectory. The Carthusian order, one of the most austere in the Church, founded by the German, Bruno, in 1086 at La Grande Chartreuse in the mountains of Dauphine in France had spread to England soon after the Norman invasion of Ireland. De Burgo did not secure Connacht until 1235 when he did so by conquest, parcelling out the province in large fees (i.e. areas of land held in fee. Ed.) among the knights who had helped him, one of whom was John de Cogan. Other Normans are also mentioned as having had land in the area, Edmund Huskard, John de Burgo, Thomas FitzJordan and Dundovenald.

John de Cogan had got a grant of free warren (game rights) in 1245 in his demesne lands of Kenaloyn and, in 1252, of a weekly market on Tuesday at his manor of Maysketh in Kenaloyn. His charter to the Carthusians was given between 1250 and 1256. It declares that John grants to 'the order of Carthusia' the following lands: the vill of Tyrloderan, and Tullachmacrustin (saving an annual rent of one mark due to the archbishop of Tuam) with right of fishing in Louculenan and all John's part of 'the lake which is called Loudergert' together with 'le Deres'. There is a further grant of 'three quarters of Tomnes, except that part which John had reserved as his own demesne land, between Carmerrun and his demesne', with the right to bring if they think fit 'the water of Moysceth through his demesne to their house'. This seems to convey that the monks were granted three separate tracts of land. The main one extended from the river southward to the monastery and included the present townlands of Carrowcrin, Tomanymore, Tomanybeg, Tomanynamrahar, Lisdurra and Eaglehill. Moysceth was obviously also in the vicinity but that name is lost. The second area was to the south and may have included Tulla and Ballinlough with fishing rights on the lake which, before a bog moved into it in the last century, was a fairly substantial body of water almost half a mile long by a quarter mile wide. The third area was Dooras on the Shannon side, again with fishing rights.

No details of the Carthusian community survive, except that there is some reference to lawsuits with John de Burgh and his widow, Joan de Burgh. These occurred in 1310 and 1339, so that the monks were still there in 1339. However, there is a record of the sale of the place in 1306 to the Order of the Knights Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem. Nevertheless, it was still with the Carthusians in 1321, when the diffinitors of the Order finally decided it should be abandoned as of no use to the Order. No further monks were to be sent to the house

except to wind up affairs. Apparently, the existing monks remained until they died out. They would have been Normans and in fact one surviving name of a prior, John de Blohily, indicates this. The reason for their disappearance was the collapse of Norman institutions generally in the country, which occurred after the murder of the Brown Earl of Ulster, Walter de Burgo, in 1333.

The rectory of the parish remained with the Knights Hospitallers and was confiscated from them at the Reformation. They established no priory here and the place was deserted from about the year 1341. The Hospitallers, a semi-military Order which had been established during the Crusades, were brought to Ireland by Strongbow in 1174 and were established first at Kilmainham. Like the Carthusians they confined themselves to Norman personnel and were indeed very powerful within the Pale, but there would have been little welcome for them in these parts after the breakdown of Norman institutions. Whatever lands they had in Connacht they were in the habit of leasing out to local people. In the year 1529 they gave power to Stephen FitzJames Lynch to lease all their Connacht holdings and collect the rents. Among them are listed 'the tithes of Kineleghan in the diocese of Clonfert' but no mention is made of the lands there.

At last in 1540 the prior, Sir John Rawson, surrendered Kilmainham and its possessions to the Crown, including the Kinelechin rectory, but they were restored to him during Queen Mary's reign. Then came Elizabeth and they were taken back by the Crown. One Walter Hope, who was constable of the castle of Mullingar and who probably had been one of the Knights of Kilmainham, made a discovery of the Connacht property and as a reward, among other items, he was given the rectory of Kinelechin on lease for 21 years. Finally, in 1578 there was a grant to the provost, burgesses and commonality of Athenry of 'the rectory of Kynnaleighane, with the tithes of Kynnaleighane and Barneboy (the altarages and one cople of the tithes for the curate and for repairing the church excepted) - To hold for ever in free socage'. The rectory was afterwards, no doubt, recovered by the Protestant Church. As regards the lands, the earl of Clanrickard in 1641 owned Carrowcrin, Tomany and Lisluderan (that is Lisdurra and Eaglehill) and the land near the Shannon, while Ballinlough and Tulla belonged to two other Burkes, Richard Mac William and Gilladuff Mac Henry.

The Friars Minor, better known as the Franciscans, came to Ireland in 1229. Their first foundations were Norman but they later spread to the Irish areas. The same John de Cogan established them in Claregalway about 1290. O'Kelly established them in Kilconnell in 1353. Now in 1371 they had a bull from Pope Gregory IX enabling them to take over the site of the Carthusian charterhouse in Kineleghin. There it was stated that once the Carthusians had held here an oratory and a few cells, but that it was now for a period of thirty years abandoned and derelict, and that it had been handed over by the Carthusians to the bishop of the diocese. The picture seems to indicate that they had never had a very extensive foundation here.

The date 1371 may be taken as the approximate date of the Franciscan foundation, and the founder this time was a de Burgo. The Burkes of Clougheen are mentioned. It too was a comparatively small house, perhaps somewhat similar to Meelick in O'Madden's country, but certainly not as extensive as Kilconnell

or Claregalway. No further history of it survives from before the Reformation except that in the year 1400 Pope Boniface IX granted an indulgence to penitents who visited the house and the church of St. Patrick there and gave alms for their conservation and repair. The Franciscan houses in the West, not having much land, were scarcely worth the trouble of confiscating, so they generally managed to survive till near the end of Elizabeth's reign. Kinelechin is returned in 1577 as being in the tenure of the earl of Clanrickard, having no lands belonging to it.

In the wars just before 1600 the convent was destroyed but Father Hugh Ward, the Franciscan writer who tells us this and who died in 1635, does not say by whom. He also says that it was not rebuilt until 1615. In between, in 1609 and 1612, chapters of the Order were held in a wood nearby. Meantime also it was confiscated and granted to John King of Dublin, a discoverer who was trafficking in church lands at the time. He also got a grant of Meelick and other places, but Clanrickard quickly bought Kinelechin and Meelick from him. He got vast grants of land forfeited by O'Kellys, O'Maddens and others, including part of Crannagh which was forfeited by Hugh MacNevin who was hanged in rebellion. The MacNevins had been chiefs of this area in pre-Norman times. King, an Englishman, had been muster master general in 1609, and in 1615 was one of the commissioners heading the government of Connacht. He was thus closely associated with Clanrickard, "Richard of Kinsale", who was then president of Connacht. King held Kinelechin for a year and then, in November, 1607, sold it to Clanrickard, but Ulick, Richard's father, already owned a quarter of land there. Richard later in 1611 got a regrant of all his property from the crown, including the late monastery of Kinalehin with a quarter of land. This was probably the area known as the Friars' Land, about 15 acres.

In 1615 the friars began to rebuild, and the Earl's mother re-roofed their church, while he himself paid for the dormitory and domestic buildings. Father Donatus Mooney, a contemporary of Father Ward's, wrote about it that 'the situation is agreeable but very solitary and remote from the turmoil of the world. It is, however, in these dangerous times a desirable place of abode for our brethren; and if there be security for them anywhere in Ireland it is to be found here. For it is in the territory of Clanrickard and, moreover, none of our enemies reside in the neighbourhood nor, indeed, do they come near it or pass at all that way. Very rich and cheerful gardens and some beautiful orchards are attached to the convent'.

Father Ward had been the prime instigator of the effort which resulted in the compilation of the Annals of the Four Masters. In 1620 he sent Michael O Clery to Ireland to collect materials on Irish history. The Franciscans were conscious that the old way of life was breaking up and they wished to save what they could of the past. O Clery came to Kinelechin in 1629 and copied the Life of St. Ceallach from the Leabhar Breac, which was there at the time. This manuscript, a compilation of the MacEgans, was at Duniry Castle about 1590 when the castle was occupied by 'Carbrey MacEgan and ye Brehons', who had a law school there and were that branch of the family known as Ollamhna Cloinne Riocaird.

The period from 1615 to the Rebellion of 1641 became progressively safer for the religious, and around 1629 friars were everywhere creeping back to their old houses. When John de Burgo was appointed bishop of Clonfert in 1642 he

was consecrated in Kinalechin. As well as being under the protection of the Marquis of Clanrickard, it was, probably, the only decent church in the diocese suitable for such a ceremony. Malachy O Queely, archbishop of Tuam, Bowes Egan, bishop of Elphin and O Molloney, bishop of Killaloe, were the co-consecrators.

No doubt the community were scattered during the Cromwellian regime, but the friars were back in residence, certainly in 1662, when they had a dispute with the Galway friars about the right to quest in Kilmacduagh, which dispute continued to 1670. From then until the Williamite War, and for some years after, the friars were reasonably safe here, but then in 1698 came the law of William and Mary which meant banishment for bishops, monks and clergy before May 1st of that year. The friars bowed to the inevitable and divided their chalices, missals and mass vestments among a number of the better-off residents in the vicinity for safe keeping. Each gave a receipt for the articles, and all the receipts were entrusted to Myles Burke, who gave an acknowledgement of them to the guardian. The people who received the goods were Simon Madden, Lord Riverston, Daniel Nevin, Pierce Aylward, Edward Fitzgerald, Robert Ffrench, James Perse O Dergor O Teige, Lawrence Warren, Redmond Burke, and Captain John Burke of Reaghan. Colonel Myles Burke was of Clontuskert, but of the family of Pallas. Redmond Burke was of Barnaboy, and Simon Madden of Carrowniownes. On the death of Colonel Burke the batch of receipts passed, through Colonel Burke of Coolfin, to Thomas Burke. Some of the chalices still survive.

After the first shock of that banishment the friars began to filter back into the country, but in 1703 a further Act was passed to prevent this, by having existing priests registered. But still they came back, and by 1712 they had returned in numbers. In 1715 the friars were back here in Kinalechin, in Meelick, and in Kilconnell, and the Dominicans in Portumna.

It would appear that when the friars returned they did not get back into the building but went to live at Tomany. They were certainly there in 1715. A letter from Stratford Eyre written at Eyrecourt in 1732 tells what happened later:

'The friars of Kinallehin removed from Tomany which is the estate of Robert Masson, Esq. to a house joining the abbey in June 1730 or thereabouts. This house and eight acres was purchased from the late Earle of Clanrickard by Denis Daly of Raford, a Convert, and by him set to those fryers. When those fryers came there in 1730 they found one Mathew Aylward following the soap boyling trade in it. They desired him leave their house with bag and baggage but Aylward went to this Daly and applyed to him for liberty to remain in the house and Daly gave him a letter which he showed to the Community and they permitted him to remain there ever since, but on Wednesday the 5 January this last past Aylward declared that Denis Daly had lately a few days before sett him the Abby and lands, for that all the hurry and trouble given of late to those friars was only to take away those acres of the Abby from him, Daly, and that to prevent (i.e. anticipate) the same, the land and Abbey was set to him, Aylward. Mark Hickey the Guardian of this Convent often declared that they paid no rent to Daly but their prayers and that he was their great benefactor. Theres a very large chappell well-slated, lately finished there'.

The friars probably lost out at this time for there is evidence that they were

back in Tomany in 1744. Richard Croasdale of Closetoken reported the existence of the friary there with the names of four friars, Nicholas Walsh, Anthony Burke, Dominick Hickey and Father Madden. After this the evidence fails, but the friars very likely struggled on to the end of the century or after. In 1807 Ballynakill and Woodford were still one parish (they were separated in 1818) and the curate was a regular, probably Franciscan. There was a great shortage of priests about 1800 and the Orders suffered most. Their small houses tended to disappear. Although the Order continued to appoint guardians to Kinelechin down to 1872 this was nominal and gives no clue as to when the friars were withdrawn from Tomany.

In the medieval period the parish rector had the greater portion of the tithe or tax on produce which was the main support of the clergy. The rectorial tithes were often diverted, as here, to the support of a religious order or a student who proposed taking orders, in which case some of the tithe was reserved to support a chaplain. This seems to have occurred here also, as when at the Reformation the confiscated rectory was granted away a small proportion of tithes for the chaplain was reserved.

The vicarage of Kinelechin which is listed in 1306 seems to have been later referred to as Kylcromhyur (Latin, presbyter; English, priest) and the name would appear to have been taken from the old church site of Kilcrimple in the townland of Marblehill. This vicarage was of the type called a perpetual vicarage which was originally devised to cope with the situation where the rectorial revenue of the parish had been diverted to other purposes, as was the case in Kinelechin. The vicar acquired a title to his benefice and could not be removed except for canonical reasons. In a broad sense, he corresponded to the parish priest of the present time. Kylcromhyr is first mentioned in 1423. It was then worth 8 marks. As the century progressed its value increased somewhat. In 1463 it was worth ten marks. Throughout the century it was held or disputed by members of the O Fahy family, some of them secular and some canons regular. The surnames O Murray and O Heagney also occur. Then in 1494 it was given, together with the vicarage of Kilthomas, west of the mountain and in Kilmacduagh diocese, to Theobald de Burgo, a canon of Kilmacduagh, being then described as the vicarage of Balenakylle. The townland of Ballinakill was, apparently, in the medieval period, part of the episcopal lands of Clonfert and the parish church was built on it. Some of the tithes of this townland belonged to the diocesan chapter, but together with part of the tithes of Tullachmachrusglaynd and some townlands elsewhere, they were used to make up a benefice without cure for some clerk.

In 1565 the vicar of 'Balenakylle alias Kyllcrumyr' was Redmund Burke, but the earl of Clanrickard held three marks of the fruits of the vicarage.

Scattered through the medieval parish of Ballinakill there were quite a number of burial places, many of which, if not church sites in the medieval period, may have been so in the earlier centuries. In the part which forms the modern parish of Ballinakill, apart from the burial ground and church ruin on glebe land in Ballinakill townland, there were Kilcurragh graveyard and Tobarmacduagh in Curragh townland, as well as Kilcrimple graveyard in Marblehill townland, a burial ground, Lady's Well and latter-day hermitage in Cuilleendaeagh, and Lisserglas children's burial ground in Kylenagappa.* In the Abbey

portion of Ballinakill, besides the cemetery attached to the convent, there were Rosaganny graveyard near to Lady's Well to the north of Abbey townland and St. Feichin's Well and graveyard in the townland of Wellpark.† In the Woodford portion of the medieval parish there were Gortnakilla graveyard in Clonmoylan, Rosaganny (now Gortaganna) graveyard in Rosmore, a graveyard in Dooros, and Knockbawn graveyard in Derrygoolin.

* *Children's burial grounds in Lagoo townland, and Knockaunagall in Moyglass townland. Ed.*

† *Gortnaheglish (Gort na hEaglaise, Church Field).*

Population Trends (1841-1981)

by Brian Keary

This short note on the population of the Woodford-Ballinakill region takes in the area covered by the old civil parish of Ballinakill. The civil parish was an old administrative unit which is no longer of any importance. It covered the area of the District Electoral Divisions of Ballynagar, Drumkeary, Loughatorick, Marblehill and Woodford in the Loughrea Union, and Abbeyville, Coose and Drummin in the Portumna Union, or, put another way, the present Catholic parishes of Woodford and Ballinakill plus a portion of Abbey/Duniry. It should be noted, therefore, that the civil parish of Ballinakill is not the same as the present diocesan parish of Ballinakill, with which we are all familiar.

The changes in the population of the old civil parish of Ballinakill and the changes in population of Ireland as a whole follow much the same pattern. A period of rapid growth from about 1650 to the Great Famine of the 1840's was followed by a continuous decline in population up to the late 1960's in Ireland as a whole and up to the present time in the region we are discussing. However, changes in 'Ballinakill Parish' were usually more extreme - during both the period of increase and the period of decline.

Information on population prior to the beginning of the 19th century is hard to come by and, in any case, rather sketchy. If, however, one looks at a map of the region which was based on a survey in the first half of the 17th century (about 1630) one notices a great absence of place names in this region. Woodford village itself is not shown. There are also indications that the area was still heavily wooded at this period. There are suggestions that the population of the Woodford-Ballinakill area was very sparse in the early 17th century. It therefore must have grown rapidly from a very low level during the following two centuries.

Other articles in this booklet examine some of the factors which led to this growth, for instance the development of the ironworks and related industries in the second half of the 17th and the first half of the 18th centuries. These not only drew people to the area but also cleared much of the wooded land and made it more suitable for farming. Also, towards the end of this period of growth, another group of people moved into the area from Ulster - the 'Ultachs'. Seamus McEneany writes of these in another article. Moreover, as in the rest of Ireland, the potatoe became the staple diet of the people, allowing them to maintain themselves on relatively small patches of land.

By 1821 the population of the civil parish of Ballinakill had reached 10,606 and by 1841, on the eve of the Great Famine, it was 14,373. As in the case of the whole country this was the high point in terms of population. The story for the next one hundred and forty years is one of decline.

If the information on the growth of population in the pre-Famine era is skimpy, the information on the decline is population since the Famine is abundant. The table given shows the decline in population from 1841 to 1981 by which year the population had dropped to 2655. This is a decline of 81% or, putting it another way, for every **ten** people living in the area in 1841, only **two** live now! The severity of this decline can also be seen when it is compared to the decline for the whole of the 26 Counties which was 47% for the period. Consistently throughout the one hundred and forty years the decline in this region has been higher than the national average. More worryingly, while both nationally, and on the country level, the population has stabalized or has shown an increase since 1966, the population of this region has continued to decline.

The reasons for the decline in the population of Ireland during this period include:

(a) fewer people getting married;
(b) those who got married doing so at a later age; and
(c) emigration.

It may be taken that there were also other reasons for the decline. However, there still remain some interesting questions. When did the increase in age of marriage occur and did it occur at the same time for the whole region? When and why did the number of people marrying decline? Why did the number of people emigrating change from period to period and did emigration affect one group of people or area more than another. These questions will, hopefully, be examined at another time.

The information in the Census can shed light not only on the region as a whole but also on the history of units of area as small as the Townland. For instance, during the Great Famine, the population of the townland of Drumminnamuckla declined from 299 to 93 while Derrygoolin North only declined 64 to 60. Even more remarkably while Derryoober East declined from 89 to 45, the population of Derryoober West increased from 56 to 83. These figures give support to the tradition that the mountain areas, while not escaping the effects of the popatoe blight entirely, were not as severely hit by the disaster.

Likewise, during the Land War (1881-1891) some insight can be gained from the figures and notes found in the census for 1881 and 1891 - the peak period of the Land War in the district. Between those years the population of Bauntia declined from 52 to 19; Rostellus from 68 to 4 and Rossmore from 172 to 87. Notes in the 1891 census state that 'the decrease is attributed to removals'. On the other hand, the population of Bolag increased from 76 to 143 and that of Looscaun from 112 to 210. These, as we know, were the townlands where the eviction huts were built and there were still large numbers of people being forced to live in them five years after the evictions started.

These few pages only indicate the rough outline of the history of the population of the region. However, even in this brief survey one can see that there are interesting similarities and differences between the population trends of Ireland as a whole and this region and, furthermore, interesting variations bet-

ween different areas within the region. Were the reasons for decline the same in the mountainous regions as in the lower better lands? Did the pattern of emigration and marriage vary from area to area and from time to time, and if so, why? These are questions which require further study and by studying them we will come to understand better not only our own area but the history of the country as a whole.

Derrybrien

by Seán Ó Ceallaigh

The usual form of the name nowadays is Derrybrien, and in Irish *Doire Uí Bhriain*, the oak-wood of Brian, or O'Brien. Brian Boru was said to have used the oak-woods of Derrybrien to shelter his guerilla bands, constantly harassing the Danes on Lough Derg and along The Shannon, and using the same tactics as the Danes themselves, the sudden attack and quick retreat, after burning their ships and settlements. Later on these guerilla bands became the nucleus of the armies of *Dál gCais,* that defeated the Danes in open battle at *Sulchóid* and Limerick, and finally at Clontarf.

However, the old people pronounced the name *Dorhee Brian,* and the last two native Irish speakers in Derrybrien in 1943, namely, John Broderick, and Tom Donnellan, called it in Irish *Darthaidh Bruíon. Darthaidh* may be a plural form of *Dorie*, which is generally accepted to mean an oak-wood, but which Prof. T.S. O'Máille thinks may mean a type of hill. *Bruíon* means a hostel or a fairy dwelling, or strife or contention.

St. Patrick in Derrybrien

St. Patrick blessed Derrybrien in the following words:
Sonas Druim Shaothráite ar shléibhte Dharthaidh Bruíon, i.e., May the prosperity of Drim be upon the mountains of Derrybrien. As he was on his way through Drim, Ballinakill, St. Patrick asked for a drink and was given water. But when he arrived in Derrybrien and asked for a drink, he was given milk, and that was in the house where Cunninghams of Tuar a' Leasa stands today. The saint was pleased and pronounced the blessing as given above. As a result, milk and butter have been plentiful in Derrybrien ever since, but Drim is not as prosperous as it was.

Crann na h-Ola

The cemetery in Derrybrien is called *Cránn na hOla.* i.e., The tree of the Holy Oil. The word *cránn* is pronounced with a long *á* as in the Irish word *tá.*

An old woman is said to have been dying at the foot of a tree. St. Patrick anointed her under the shade of the tree. The old woman died shortly afterwards and was buried beneath the tree. Since she was the first Christian to be buried there, all subsequent Christian burials took place there, and the cemetery was named after the tree, *Cránn na hOla.*

A flagstone in the cemetery has the imprint of St. Patrick's knees, where he

prayed for the old woman. It contains rainwater at all times, and people who suffer from sore eyes, go there and wash on nine different occasions and are cured. Little things of no value such as buttons are left there as a token of gratitude; money is not allowed.

John Broderick

John Broderick, uncle of the present Johnny Broderick, poet of Derrybrien, was a great storyteller, in Irish and English. This is one of his stories:

One day St. Patrick visited a house. The woman of the house told him that all the men were out in the fields watering the wheat, which was beginning to fail for want of rain. She was so upset about the wheat that she paid no attention whatsoever to the saint. St. Patrick decided to teach her a lesson. 'What's in the oven?' he asked. 'A cake, of course', said she. 'Lift the lid', said he. She did so, and what was there, growing out of the hot oven but the finest of fresh green grass. 'How well the green grass can grow in the hot oven', said he, 'without rain or water'.

Another of John Broderick's stories went like this in Irish. It would lose much of its flavour in translation.

Beirt deartháir de mhuintir Chúg (McHugo) a raibh An Taobh (pronounced Tive) Thiar de Dharthaidh Bruíon ag duine acu agus An Taobh Thoir (East Side) ag an duine eile. Bhí fear an Thaobh Thoir pósta, agus lá dá dtáinig fear an Taobh Thoir isteach chuig a dhinnéar, thosaigh sé ag caitheamh cuid den bhia ag an mada. Ba mhór le bean an tí sin, agus ar sise:

'Ní beag fear gan chuid ina choin é féin'. 'It is more than enough to have a pauper eating like a hound himself'. The brother was so angry that he went to Portumna right away and sold An Taobh Thoir, The East Side of Derrybrien, to The Earl of Clanrickard, rather than leave it to his brother's children.

There was always a certain amount of competition, which sometimes came to blows in the olden days, between the two halves of Derrybrien, The East Side and The West Side. Hurling matches between the school children of both sides were taken quite seriously. The boundary was the little stream that runs beside the boreen leading to the cemetery of *Crán na hOla.*

The worst nickname you could call a person in Derrybrien was *'Ultach'* (Ulsterman), pronounced *Amhaltach,* or Owl-tach. At the time of The Ulster Plantation, people from the North settled here on the mountain, and around *Sliabh an Óir.* They sowed ridges on the mountain half a mile long, and the tracks of these ridges can be seen to this day.

Another of John Broderick's stories went like this:

Sagart a briseadh is ar baineadh cead Aifrinn dó ab ea Éamonn na Síóg. Chuir sé faoi i nDarthaidh Bruíon i mbotháinín ar thaobh srutha in aice leis an Aill Dearg. Bhíodh sé ag leigheas gach uile ghalra, agus bhíodh sagart ar pharáiste ina dhiaidh.

Ag an Aifreann i nDarthaidh Bruíon lá agus an sagart ag dul ag léamh Aifrinn, múchadh na coinnle gan ábhar ar bith. Múchtaí arís iad an pointe a lasthaí iad. D'fhéach an sagart thart agus chonaic sé Éamon. 'Tá Éamonn na Síóg sa séipéal' ar seisean. 'Tá mé anseo, a Bheartla an Chuthaigh, agus las anois iad mé tá tú in ann'.

The Derrybrien Song, Amhrán Doire Uí Bhriain, was composed by Seámus de Paor, a native of Derrybrien, who married a woman from the 'country', as the people from the 'mountain' call the people living on the lowlands or plain. They settled down in the 'country' near Gort, but he was lonesome for the 'mountain', and wanted to go back to live in Derrybrien among his old friends. She did not agree, and the song consists of alternate stanzas by the husband and wife, of which these are the opening two:-

Amhrán Doire Uí Bhriain

I. An Fear

Tá mé tinn bhreoite lag is gan mé ar fónamh
Taréis gach dubrón do ghaibh mé ariamh thríd
Ghlac mé comhairle nach ndeachaigh orm ar fónamh
Dul leat im chónai síos ar an dtír:
Agus nuair nach ar fónamh tá sé ag dul domhsa
Diólfaidh mé mo ghóltas is imeoidh mé arís
Agus rachaidh mé im chónai go tír geal na hóige
I measc mo sheanchomharsain go Doire Uí Bhriain.

The Seasons

Mary E. Flannery

I

I love Spring when Mother Earth puts on her robe of green,
And small birds build their nests and sing, and buttercups are seen,
On bank and brae the dasies white, their golden hearts aglow,
O yes, I love the Spring indeed, and the little streams that flow.

II

I love the Summertime so fair, the sunrise in the morn,
The cuckoo's call, the swallow's flights, the fields of waving corn.
The boglands brown, the heather green, and all the Summer sounds,
That echo o'er each field and glen, and happiness abound.

III

I love the shortening Autumn days, before the leaves fall down,
When harvest-time has come and gone, with plenty all around.
The stillness in the evening air, the morning mists that cling,
O'er hills that now are turning brown, migrant birds upon the wing.

IV

I love the Winter though it brings, the bitter winds that blow,
From Eastern lands beyond the seas, and bring the frost and snow.
But Winter brings the Chistmas-tide, that will all hearts delight,
Remember Jesus came on earth, on a bitter Winter's night.

The Turoe Stone at Ballaun, Loughrea

Michael Mac Mahon

This richly decorated stone stands in the front lawn of Turoe House at Bullaun about three miles to the north of Loughrea. Originally it was discovered beside an earthen ringfort, known locally as the "Rath of Feerwore", some few fields to the west of its present location. The stone is a biscuit-coloured rounded block of granite, about three feet high; the top half profusely ornamented with curvilinear designs in relief. The style is typical of that form of Celtic art known as **La Tene.** Celtic **(La Tene)** art is abstract in form and manifests itself in spirals, 'trumpet' designs and interlinking curves. Similar motifs are found on artifacts dating mainly from 500-50BC all over Central Eurpoe. In Ireland this art style endured for centuries and formed a major element in the ornamentation of many of our most cherished early-Christian treasures e.g. the 8th century Ardagh Chalice, the 9th century Book of Kells and the sculptured 10th. century crosses.

The purpose of the Turoe Stone has never been definitely established, but it is generally regarded as having served a ritual or cult function. Single standing stones were erected to serve a variety of purposes from the Bronze Age right down to the early medieval period. The magical tall stone at Tara, known as the **Lia Fáil,** served a ceremonial purpose connected with the crowning of the pagan kings; and other single standing stones are found at the inauguration sites at Carnfree and Magh Adhair. The use of standing stones for ritual purposes continued after the introduction of Christianity into Ireland and Britain, and is detectable both in the erection of stone crosses and in the adaptation of existing prehistoric examples for Christian use by inscribing a cross on them.

The Turoe Stone has been described as the finest example in Europe of a series of ritual stones embodying the Celtic **La Tene** ornament. The ringfort beside which the stone originally stood, was excavated in 1938 and revealed traces of occupation by three separate groups of people at various times between 100BC-100AD. It has been suggested that the stone probably dates from about the same period, although the excavation failed to establish its relationship with the fort.

The Miraculous Kilcorban Madonna

The wooden oak figure of Our Lady of Kilcorban is probably the oldest wooden statue now extant in Ireland. It has similar artistic techniques to Romanesque sculpture of the late 12th and early 13th century, though of local Irish craftsmanship, with its smiling and tender face, unlike the serious facial expressions of contemporary European figures. Theologically, it portrays Mary's Divine Motherhood, with the arm of the child Jesus pointing upwards to the Mother of both God and Man, as defined at the Council of Ephesus 431, and thus portrayed in sculpture and in art until the 14th century. Hence it compliments the statue of Our Lady of Clonfert, in which Mary is portrayed as the Mother of the Human Race, and is approximately 100 years older than the latter 14th century statue, which is an object of great devotion in the Catholic

The Kilcorban Madonna Statue.

Church at Clonfert. Historically, Our Lady of Kilcorban came from the monastery of St. Corban, founded in the 7th century originally, and situated in the present parish of Killeen and Tynagh, close to the old road to Galway, and four miles west from Portumna. It was occupied since the 12th century Church Reform after the Synod of Kells in 1152, by the Canons regular of St. Augustine, who were mostly under the patronage of Our Lady, hence the devotion to her at Kilcorban. This devotion was further incresed by the advent of the Cistercians in the early 13th century to Portumna form Dunbrody, Co. Wexford; hence the creation not only of this Virgin and Child figure itself, but also its miraculous power, which development sprung from that intense Irish Mariological devotion and deep local faith. Thus when the Dominicans reached Kilcorban in 1444, this wooden statue was already widely venerated, causing them to build for it "the holy chapel of the most Blessed Mother of God," as it was referred to in the 17th century: "capella Beatissimae Deiparae Sacra". Kilcorban remained undisturbed during the suppression of Religious Houses by Henry VIII, but suffered later during the Cromwellian confiscation, when the Nugents replaced MacJonack Burkes at Pallas, while the latter took care of the statue at their new home in Lisheenard.

Frequent miracles were associated with it during this period, and referred to in O'Heynes' "History of the Irish Dominicans"; these continued during the Penal Laws when the friars had to leave their ancient Abbey, but evidently

returned from their hideouts to frequently celebrate Mass; nearby at the Kilcorban Holy Well, the Virgin and Child figure was placed on an ash tree. Local tradition asserts that thousands of people came there on feasts of Our Lady, and on the various Pattern Days of the Holy Well, as a result of the number of miracles and cures, especially the healing of blindness. Unfortunately, it was alleged that some damage was done to the crops and fields around the monastery, by the constant stream of visitors, so that the Nugents eventually closed in the Well and cut down the famous ash tree. Tradition asserts that during the process, the right hand of the baby, Jesus, was also cut off accidentally, and is still missing. The statue itself was later handed over to the Parish Priest at Tynagh, and left in the Sacristy of the old church there. Rediscovered in 1902, and then exposed for veneration annually on the feast of St. Laurence, patron of Tynagh Church, its record of miraculous favours recontinued again, as Fr. John Cunningham P.P. records in 1911: "I have known instant relief come to patients touching the statue of the Blessed Virgin". The wooden figure was presented to the Clonfert Diocesan Museum in Loughrea by Fr. Bowes P.P. in 1957, and is at present on loan to the National Museum, Dublin, before returning to the newly built Clonfert Museum later this year.

Besides the miraculous statue of the Madonna, three other wooden figures emerged from Kilcorban's religious history, namely the 15th century statue also in oak of St. Catherine, devotion to whom spread to Ireland from Europe with the Normans; she was also venerated in Clontuskert and Aughrim by the Canons Regular of St. Augustine. The other two staues are a Crucifixal figure, and a Calvary group of Our Lady and St. John around a Crucifixal figure, carved in sycamore and both dating from the 17th century evidently. Indeed the whole history of Kilcorban would require a book to itself, as this is but a mere summary, and what more appropriate time than now to coincide with the restoration work on the monastery. Work has recently begun on the restoration of the ancient chapel at Kilcorban, which was erected to hold the statue originally under an AnCo project, and with local support. All the old headstones and sepulchral slabs with elaborate carvings, will be cleaned and secured, likewise the various window heads, mulions and transoms, that are strewn about the existing cemetery, and were sometimes used unfortunately as head stones. It is also hoped to re-open the former Holy Well near the monastery, in addition to road widening and other work, that should make Kilcorban a place to be proud of in the coming times.

What would make local people especially happy, would be the permanent return of their beloved statue to Killeen Church, its place of birth among the people of Kilcorban, from whose devotion to Mary the Mother of God it was created eight hundred years ago, approximately. Devotion to Our Lady of Kilcorban has revived considerably in latter years, especially, since local congregations had an opportunity to see the original figure recently, at the parish Mission in Tynagh and Killeen. It is their earnest prayer that the Dominican historian, O'Heyne's description in the 17th century, will become true again in the present age; "The frequent miracles which God works through this statue of the Blessed Virgin, continually confirms the catholics in the true faith and devotion to the Queen of Heaven".

Cathal Stanley CC. Killeen.

Derryhiveny Castle
A Typical Irish Tower

by Michael Mac Mahon

Some of the most visible ancient features of the Irish countryside are the tall, rectangular stone towers, characterised by narrow, forbidding slits for windows. They are found in various states of preservation in almost all parts of the country, although, as might be expected, they are better represented in the more fertile areas.

While these structures are usually referred to as "castles", the term is not strictly accurate; in its true form the castle belongs to an earlier period and denotes a fortified stronghold designed to fortify a strategic position. Essentially the castle consisted of a strong rectangular keep, or tower, standing in an area enclosed by a stout wall which was sometimes moated. Terryglass, although perhaps never completed, is nonetheless a good example of the early Norman strong keep fortified by a round tower at each corner. It is assigned to the early part of the 13th century.

The tall narrow tower houses, of which Derryhiveny is one of the best surviving examples, belong to a much later period. They were smaller and less impressive than the earlier Norman fortresses, but were still impregnable enough to serve both as defences and houses for the chieftains. The impetus for their erection is often said to derive from a statute of 1429 which provided, amongst other things, that "every liege man of our Lord, the King of the said counties (Dublin, Meath, Kildare and Louth i.e. The Pale) who chooses to build a castle or tower sufficiently embattled or fortified within the next ten years to wit 20 feet in length, 16 feet in width and 40 feet in height or more, that the commons of the said counties shall pay to the said person, to build the said castle or tower ten pounds by way of subsidy". And, so, the introduction of the royal subsidy could be said to have had the same impact on castle building as has today's government grant on modern house building. But whatever the derivation of the new design, the tower house had become fashionable by the middle of the 15th century; and for the next two hundred and fifty years it was the standard residence of the Irish and Anglo-Irish chieftains. Some tower houses even continue in use to the present day, though they are now usually incorporated into more modern buildings. The advent of artillery finally signalled the end of the traditional tower house; and in many instances the breached walls visible today are evidence of the deadly effectiveness of the cannon ball.

The tower house at Derryhiveny was one of the last of its kind and is also one of the few in Ireland which can be precisely dated. An inscription on its north-east angle reads: D: OM ME: FIERI: FECIT: 1643. Contemporary records show that the initials stand for Daniel O'Madden, a chieftain of his family. Very little is known about the subsequent history of the castle; but its well-preserved condition would seem to indicate that it never came under any serious assault. The walls of the main tower are in a near-perfect condition and there are also fairly extensive remains of the L-shaped 'bawn', or courtyard.

Derryhiveny provides us with a typical example of the simple plan to which Irish tower houses generally adhered. It is a plain oblong structure expanded

upwards to a height of fifty-three feet at the top of the parapet. It has four storeys and an attic and is never more than two rooms thick at any floor. A spiral stone stairs in the south-eastern corner gives access to all the upper floors. Running completely round the top is a wall-walk crowned by parapets and having defensive features known as **machicolations** at two opposing angles. These were projecting stone hoardings with downward openings through which missiles could be discharged at an attacker on the ground below. Derryhiveny has as well a number of features which accord with the last phase of tower house building, notably some large mullioned windows and classically moulded chimneys set diagonally in Jacobean style, features which may well have been copied from those in Richard De Burgo's Jacobean mansion at nearby Portumna.

Conditions in the Tower Houses

In trying to form a picture of what life was like in the Irish tower house, the contemporary historical records afford little assistance. At best the rooms were probably cold and poorly-lit, and the furnishings were bare. An interesting eye-witness account is provided by a French traveller, Boullaye le Gouz, in 1644:-

'The castles or houses of the nobility consist of four walls extremely high, thatched with straw; but to tell the truth, they are nothing but square towers without windows, or at least having such small apertures as to give no more light than a prison. They have little furniture, and cover their rooms with rushes, or which they make their beds in Summer, and of straw in Winter. They put rushes a foot deep on their floors and on their windows, and many ornament the ceilings with branches".

But if the furnishings were sparse and uninviting, the hospitality offered by the hosts was truly Irish, as we learn from the colourful comments of another 17th century visitor, Luke Gernon:-

'We are come to the castle already. The castles are built very strong with narrow stayres, for security. The hall is the uppermost room; let us go up, you shall not come down agayne till morrow. Take no care of your horses, they shall be sessed among the tenants. The lady of the house meets you with her trayne... salutations pased you shall be presented with all the drinkes in the house, first the ordinary beere, then aquavitae, then sacke; then olde-ale, the lady tastes it, you must not refuse it. The fyre is prepared in the middle of the hall, where you may solace yourself till supper time, you shall not want sacke and tobacco. By this time the table is spread and plentifully furnished with variety of meates, but ill-cooked and without sauce. They feast together with great jollity and healths around; towards the middle of the supper, the harper begins to tune and singeth Irish rymes of ancient making. Supper being ended it is at your liberty to sit up, or to depart to your lodgeing, you shall have company in both kind. When you come to your chamber, do not expect canopy and curtaynes. It is very well if your bed content you, and if the company be great, you may well happen to be bodkin in the middle. In the morning there will be brought unto you a cup of aquavitae...it is a very wholesome drinke, and natural to digest the crudityes of the Irish feeding. You may drinke a knaggin without offence. Breakfast is but the repetition of supper. When you are disposing of yourself to depart, they call for a **deoch a' dorais,** *that is, to drink at the doore, there you are presented agayne with all the drinkes in the house, as at your first entrance. Smacke them over, and let us departe'.*

The Visit of John Stevens's Jacobite Army (1690 - 1691) Killaloe to Duniry

Even today, the countryside immediately to the west of Lough Derg is relatively inaccessible to a traveller approaching from the east. It does not lie on any major route, and tends to be bypassed. In earlier times, when roads were few and poor, these considerations applied even more strongly, with the result that there are few early descriptions of the district from travellers. One of the earliest, if not the very earliest, is the diary of John Stevens.

John Stevens was an English Catholic infantry officer in the army of King James. He passed through the district twice, firstly in the summer of 1690, when a contingent of the army was ordered north from Limerick to the relief of Athlone, then undergoing its first siege. The second time was in the summer of 1691, en route from Limerick to Aughrim. Whether Stevens was with the survivors who are said to have passed through Woodford after Aughrim, bound for Limerick, we cannot tell, for his diary unfortunately stops short just before the battle of Aughrim. Defeat there could explain his silence and bad mood perhaps? The Jacobites army was compelled to keep the west bank of the Shannon, since the east was controlled by the Williamites.

Stevens' description is hardly a flattering one. In general, his contempt for Ireland and the Irish, is only surpassed by his dislike for his French allies. His account strikes us as sometimes vague, at other times perhaps too sweeping, but whatever its faults, it is of value as being seemingly the only description of the area surviving from the period.

There is as will be noted, a certain amount of repetition in the entries for 1690 and 1691.

"*Thursday the 24th (July 1690):* we marched first from Killaloe along the side of the mountain near the Shannon, which about this place makes a very large lough or lake. This way is very close and woody but lasts not long, as soon as out of it the rest is across the barren hills, till we came to a small village called Tomgraney, which is five Connaught miles from Killaloe, and the miles here are of an excessive length. We halted a little farther at another village called Scarriff, neither of these places worth the naming, but for some iron mills that were there before the war. Close by these two places is a large stone bridge which joins, or rather the river that runs under it parts, the counties of Clare and Galway, the same being also the bounds of the provinces of Munster and Connaught. At Scarriff begins one of the most desert wild barbarous mountains that ever I beheld, and runs eight miles outright, there being nothing to be seen upon it but rocks and bogs, no corn, meadow, house or living creature, not so much as a bird. Nothing grows but a wild sedge, fern, and heath. In wet winters this way is absolutely impassable, in dry summers it is a soft way, but at best in many places very boggy, so that at no time cannon or heavy carriages can pass that way. Meat was as scarce as other necessaries, but that me might not be destitute of all, Providence had furnished a small brook which, though foul and ill tasted by reason of the rain and bog, afforded us plenty of drink.

Friday the 25th: with the day began our march over the remaining part of this barbarous mountain, just at the end whereof is a wood very thick, the trees

coarse and misshapen, and as the others afford no large timber. It was a great satisfaction to us from the tops of the mountains to discover at a distance ploughed land, pasture and some few scattered cottages. At length having passed what was left of the solitude we cane to a small place the English call Woodford and the Irish Graig, where it being St. James's day we halted and heard Mass. Then marched four miles further through a more tolerable country, but not over fertile or well improved to a poor village called Duniry, where we were drawn up in the fields early enough to have hutted, had there been necessaries for building. Wood there was, but scarce any thing wherewith to cut it, yet for form the soldiers were obliged to break boughs the best they could and make the shape of huts, which there being no straw or other thing to cover them with, was merely for show and not conveniency, so that in fine we lay, without any other covering than the canopy of heaven. I know not whether a true devotion wherewith soldiers are seldom overstocked, or whether it were not superstition to which they are subject enough, that prevailed with our men to spare a few trees, that stood in the front of our battalion. The country people, whether as a received tradition or to the intent to save them, telling some story of a saint who had live there, and after his death visibly punished some one who had presumed to destroy the trees. The story I understood not well, nor even before or since heard of the saint, but many such as usually related there.

News having been brought that the siege of Athlone had been raised, the party returned to Limerick, taking the better road via Loughrea, Gort, Quin and Sixmilebridge.

Loughrea to Lyrecourt via Gort, Quin and Sixmilebridge.

Sunday the 27th: we marched to Loughrea six miles, all the country hitherto is wild, mountainous and in my judgement may be called barren; but some people are so blinded with affection, they will not allow the worst of soils to be called barren, because it produces fern and wild sedge, which the miserable cattle having no better are forced to feed upon; and yet some will maintain that to be a rich soil, which all the art of man cannot improve, so as to bear anything but oats and potatoes. At the town begins a valley which extends some miles in length and breadth. It is not very plain, but has several old ruins of castles and gentlemen's houses, and there being many enclosures from the mountains, it looks like an exceeding pleasant and fertile place, but coming to view all this near it is only ruins and a barren soil, wherein are some scattered cornfields, some coarse pasture and the rest nothing but ferns and rushes. The town is like the country, promises well at a distance, but when near you find only the remaions of a formerly indifferent place with some memory of walls, the gates yet standing. There is also little more than the ruins of a very considerable house belonging to the Earls of Clanricarde. Adjoining the town is a great lough or lake, out of which runs a small river, and from the lough I suppose the town takes its name. Here every company had a home assigned for quarters.

Monday the 28th: we continued here, Brigadier Sarsfield marched away with the horse under his command who had quartered in the neighbourhood. At our setting out of Limerick, there marched also four pieces of cannon and a body

of horse and dragoons, all which took the way of Loughrea for the conveniency of the road, which is hard and fit for draught, whereas the way the feet took was unfit for heavy carriages, but being the shorter was judged best for the foot, both for their ease and that they might sooner relieve Athlone, which was thought to be pressed and in danger, and by their coming might be strengthened the better to expect farther relief. But upon the news of the enemies quitting the siege, the foot marched back the easiest though the longest way, and where they could have quarters to refresh them.

Tuesday the 29th: proved an excessive hot day, yet we marched nine miles of that country (which are the longest I ever saw) without halting, then rested a while near Gort, a very small inconsiderable village upon a very rocky river, over which is a stone bridge, and adjoining to it a very large house. The road hither is along one end of the bottom I spoke of before, and partakes much of the hills and barrenness. After a short halt we marched three miles farther to a mill about a mile from the place Toberreendony, famous for a clear spring dedicated to our blessed Lady, as the name imports in Irish, and held in great veneration by all the neighbouring people. Part of this way is through lanes, the rest very stony and hilly...

Sunday the 7th (June 1691): ...marched (from Killaloe) at three of the clock in the morning. First to Tomgraney, five miles, a little ruined town, within half a mile of which is Scarriff, neither of them worth the noting, but for the iron mills there formerly, now gone to decay. The road is all mountain with a wood along the Shannon. Hence we marched to Graig, or as the English called it Woodford, eight miles over an uncouth barbarous mountain full of bogs and covered only with wild sedge, farn, and heath, without one house, cottage or so much as a living creature of any sort to be seen. In winter this way is impassable when the season is wet, but in a dry summer good, yet as best boggy in some places. The miles are long and the day was very hot without the least breath of wind, tiresome to the soldiers and to me so much, that had we not made a halt two miles beyond Graig, I had not been able to go farther, being afoot and quite spent with the fatigue. Nor is it to be admired that officers should be afoot when we were cooped up in a corner of the country where horses were grown very scarce, the army having been so long without pay, as was mentioned before miserably poor, and I as a stranger particularly wanting many helps which the natives had. At Woodford there is an iron work in the bottom, upon a small river that falls into the Shannon: the town stands on the hill above it. The bridge at Tomgraney joins, or rather the river that runs under it parts, the county of Clare from that of Galway, the same being also the bounds of the provinces of Munster and Connaught. To add to our weariness we were marched an English mile beyond the town and, there being no convenient ground to encamp, we obliged to march back through the town, where we encamped in the manner of our drawing up as pitching the gound. Here some bullocks were slaughtered and divided to the soliders.

Monday the 8th: the general beat at four, but we stirred not in two hours after, then set forward and marched seven miles, which in this country are the longest in Ireland, though none there be short. The first part of this way is

mountain, then a pleasant bottom, most good pasture land. We struck two miles into this valley and ought to have kept along the sides of the hills, but none knowning the way went astray near two miles, for after four hour's march we were at the Abbey, which is but two miles from Woodford. Thence three miles along a pleasant country till we came to Portumna Park, which is very pleasant and delightful, and a full mile through it, and just under it the town of Portumna, small yet better than many of the country towns in that province. We made no halt, but marched a mile farther and encamped on a rising ground. The day was hot, and though the number of miles small, the way seemed long and tiresome. Some small allowance of beef was here given to the soldiers.

Tuesday the 9th: nothing of note, but that one small bullock was divided among all the officers of the regiment, a very poor allowance, and all they reveived since they left Limerick.

Wednesday the 10th: ...marched five miles to Meelick. The country is pleasant, being diversified with cornfields, pasture land, and some underwood and brakes. From the time we left Limerick till we came to this place, I did not see ten head of any sort of cattle, but what was with the army, either horses, cows, or sheep, very few people and nothing but ruined villages. At Meelick in the small islands the river Shannon there makes, the people had secured some small flocks of sheep and a few black cattle. This place consists of a few scattering cottages, one gentleman's house in an island and an old castle in another little island, upon one of the passes of the Shannon, which pass is convenient enough for travellers with a guide; but not for an army, the ford being narrow with several windings and dangerous on both sides. Here is also the residence of a few Franciscan friars, only remarkable for the poverty of their house and chapel, which are nothing but long thatched cabins. The walls of a handsome chapel designed by these friars are standing, but never roofed or further finished than the raising of them to their full height. All round is a very delightful plain, the soil good, but inclining to bog in wet weather...

Friday the 19th: ...we decamped and marched immediately five miles to a place whose name, if it has any, I could not learn, there being no village, house or place of note near it. The first mile of this way is a large beaten road as bad at this time with the continual rain, as if it had been the depth of winter, where stands the much noted house in Connaught called **Eyre's Court,** being a pleasant seat built by one Mr. Eyre and much celebrated in the country; but by what I could perceive in marching by it, nothing answerable to what fame reports. All that can be said, it is a pretty gentleman's seat, the house large with a pleasant wood on the back of it; but no good prospect any way, nor any river near it. Round about is hilly ground, which, with the improvements and the convenient neighbourhood of a small village, make it delightful enough. The land hither is most enclosed, though some of it full of shrubs and wild. The next two miles is all common, covered with fern, heath, much sedge and some patches of good grass and several bogs. No dwelling is in this way, but at the end of the two miles an old house or castle, where begins for the following two miles to be some enclosures and much more bog and shrubby land...."

Iron Works and Minerals

by Tomás Ó Gormáin

The Irish name of Woodford is An Ghráig, or Gráig na Muilte Iarainn, the village of the iron mills. Since the name does not appear under any form in Petty's map of County Galway, which was probably based on a survey around 1636, it is most likely that the town only came into existence in the latter part of the 17th century, perhaps initially in the form of dwelling houses for workers in the iron mills.

A half-formed iron bar, traditionally said to have come from the Woodford works, and which still survives, bears the date 1681; it seems reasonable to assume that this was the year in which the works started.

John Stevens, an English officer in King James' army, who passed through Woodford in 1690 and 1691, refers to the iron mills which were apparently in operation there at that time. (see his Diary).

The ironworks in Woodford and at Ballinruane (Meelick) in the parish of Whitegate were advertised for letting, evidently as a going concern, in 1758, and there is a further mention of them being still in operation in 1764. By that time virtually all the ironworks which has functioned in Ireland at various periods between the early 1600s and about 1750 had closed down. So it would seem that the Woodford works, which in their day were among the best-known in the country, were also one of the last to survive.

The principal raw material used in such works was known as bog ore or bog iron ore. It is to be found in many locations throughout the country, usually in smallish quantities in shallow beds close to the surface, its presence being often indicated by the red or ochre colour of streams, drains or wells in the vicinity. No particular spot is remembered as the source for the Woodford works, and it may be that the ore was procured at various points in the district.

The particular attraction of the Woodford area for ironworking would have been, not so much any special abundance of bog ore, as the extensive oakwoods which formerly existed there, and which are evidenced by the frequent occurence of Doire (oakwood), Coill (wood) and Ros (wood) in local placenames. Large oak forests covered much of south-east Galway and north-east Clare, to the west of Lough Derg. Ironworks to take advantage of these forests, were established at Tomgraney and Scariff as early as the 1620s and 1630s; works were also located at Feakle and Whitegate. Until the latter half of the 18th century, when the secret of smelting iron with coal fuel (in the form of coke) had been mastered, timber charcoal was essential for the making of iron, and iron works were located where the timber supply was most plentiful, rather than the iron, since fuel accounted for the greater part of the cost production. Charcoal is produced by the slow burning of timber in heaps, from which nearly all the air has been excluded.

The necessary power for working the furnace bellows, and the big forge hammer which beat out the iron into bars, was obtained, just as with an ordinary corn mill, by damming a river having a sufficient flow of water. The Woodford River, passing between the steep slopes of Barkhill and the town hill, was suitable for this purpose.

The exact location of the works at Woodford is uncertain, but is seems likely

that there was a furnace on the slopes of Barkhill, and probably a forge at the site of Roche's corn mill. The water in the Bay would have provided the power for these. Presumably there was a second forge at Upper Forge, and it is said that there was a second Bay or pond above this point, but that at some stage the dam gave way. There is also a tradition that initially the river was dammed downstream of Roche's mill, where it is said the remains of buildings were formerly to be seen, but that the site had to be abandoned because it proved to be subject to flooding.

Bog ore by itself did not yield satisfactory iron; it needed to have a proportion of higher-grade ore mixed in with it. Such ore was obtainable at Tomgraney, or on the Shannon below Limerick; alternatively, it could be imported from England. In either case it could be conveyed to Woodford via Lough Derg; this was important in an era when roads were few and bad, and poorly adapted for the carriage of heavy loads. Boats of up to 20 tons could come up the Woodford (Rossmore) River as far as the Perch Hole, below Geeran's Bridge. The same route was available for the outward dispatch of the finished iron. After the ironworks closed, and until Rossmore Pier was built towards the end of the 1800s, the Perch Hole continued to be the point where water-borne goods destined for Woodford were unloaded.

Ironworking of the period consisted basically of three operations; first, the production of charcoal to fuel the works; second, the smelting of the iron ore in a furnace; and third, the refining of the cast iron and hammering it out into bars.

The ore and the charcoal were filled into the furnace from the top; to facilitate this, furnaces were often built on a slope. Limestone was added to assist the process of smelting. At intervals (usually 12 or 24 hours) the molten iron was allowed to run out from the base of the furnace into moulds known as pigs; hence the cast iorn was known as pig iron. The dross or impurities floating on top of the molten iron was drawn off at intervals through the side of the furnace, and when cooled took the form of cinders, also known as clinkers or slag. It has been said that a bed of clinker several feet thick, was formerly to be seen at the site of the furnace at Woodford. According to a practice common at the time, clinker was sometimes used as material for the foundations of roads. It has been said that some of the molten iron at Woodford was used to make cast-iron pots and pans, but it is likely that mostly it was used instead to make bar iron.

For this latter purpose, the pigs of cast iron were taken to the forge to be reheated and refined one or more times, and then placed under the big hammer to be hammered out into bars - a very noisy process. Bars were the form in which iron was usually sold, to be converted by manufacturers in Ireland or Britain, into various wrought-iron products as required.

There are the remains of 2 furnaces at Meelick, Whitegate, which seem to have been operated in conjunction with Woodford, and may even have preceded Woodford (as the Tomgraney/Scariff ones certainly did). There are also the remains of a furnace at Derryoober, but according to the Geological Survey (1862) this was never finished or used. The Survey states that the Woodford works comprised a furnace, casting house and rolling mills. The rolling iron was an alternative process to hammering into bars; it produced rod iron which was used, among other things, for making nails.

The Geological Survey recorded the existence in 1862 of an anvil and hammer from the Woodford works, but if these still survive, their present whereabouts is unknown.

Ironworks used up the forests at a tremendous rate (although the 1758 advertisement claimed that there were several woods within 3 miles of the Woodford works sufficient to keep them going for ever). There was increasing competition from Swedish, Russian and Spanish iron. But even if the woods had lasted, it is unlikely that the timber-based iron works could have survived against the economic advantages of smelting with coke, which almost entirely displaced charcoal as a fuel in the second half of the 18th century.

One of the few traditions which have survived locally is that the first ironworkers came from Wales, and it is a fact that South Wales, and the nearby Forest of Dean, were two of the major ironworking centres of that time. The surnames of Tamplin/Templeton, (no longer found locally) Pearse and Seymour, (which still persists), are said to have this origin, while another report cites Walsh and Canning.

Certain other surnames found in the district, now or in the last century, could have come in with the ironworks - names such as Davis, Felle, Gardiner, Kemple, Mathews, Nash, Page, Pigott, Porter, Robinson, Saunders, Sellers, Steward, Willis - but without fuller information it is impossible to do more than speculate.

The ironworks in Woodford and Meelick seem to have been originated by a Sir Henry Waddington, a Cromwellian settler who obtained lands at Closetoken, near Loughrea, and at Woodford; but the family principally associated with the works is that of Croasdaile or Crossdale, who were related to Waddington, and who also held lands at Rynn, near Rosenallis, Laois. Family tradition had it, that the Croasdailes sold their Woodford properties about 1780 in order to finance the raising of a company of Grattan's Volunteers. However, a map of 1786 shows a gentleman's residence at Woodford still in the name of Croasdaile. Griffith's Valuation of 1856 records a William Crossdale resident in Woodford, probably the last of the name to survive west of the Shannon. The family seat in Rynn was sold to the Land Commission in 1935, and the house was subsequently demolished. The last of the line there was Lancelot Henry Croasdaile, whose mother was a Catholic, and who became a Jesuit priest, dying in 1966. Other branches of the family still survive in Northern Ireland and the United States.

In the days when the Woodford works flourished, a dispute between the Croasdailes and the daughters of Sir Henry Waddington over the ownership and revenue of the Woodford and Meelick works, was decided by the Irish Courts in favour of the latter. The Croasdailes pursued their appeal to the House of Lords, but lost again. Nevertheless, they seem to have continued somehow to own and control the works until they finally sold them.

It has been said that the tanning of leather, using oak bark, preceded the ironworks in Woodford. Small-scale individual tanning was conducted around Woodford at a later period, and it is said that traces of the pits used in this connection can still be observed in the woods around Woodford. The Ordnance Survey map of 1838 shows the site of a disused tannery, later converted into a

graveyard, outside Woodford; a second tannery site is shown at Coose. It has also been stated that a salt works operated in Woodford for a time after the ironworks closed. Nothing is known about this industry, but it seems possible that, like the ironworks, it used local timber supplies as fuel; otherwise it is difficult to see why the venture should have been located in Woodford.

Monsieur de Latocnaye: Scarrif to Loughrea (1796-97)

Another traveller to visit the region was, in 1796/7, a certain Monsieur de Latocnaye, a French aristocrat from Brittany, an èmigré or refugee from the French Revolution. His method in travelling round Ireland was, having armed himself with letters of introduction to various gentry, to proceed on foot between their mansions.

(Proceeding north from Killaloe) "I went along the western bank of Lough-Derg, and accosted an honest attorney, who was going to levy contributions on the adjacent country; he showed me, at some distance from the bank, a square tower on a rock; some bold smugglers had established a distillary there to avoid paying taxes; they fortified themselves, and were provided with arms; no revenue-officer would venture his precious life against these courageous friends of the **creature.** Government was obliged to send troops and artillery against them, but they were near the lake, and besides it was not the intention of government to put them to the sword; they were blockaded, stood a fortnight's siege, and then surrendered on honourable terms.

I passed that day at Mr. T. Grady's of Tomgrany, a pretty village at the extremity of the bay I spoke of; from it may be seen many islands in the lake, one in particular called Holy Island, on which is a very high round tower; there were formerly seven churches there too; the inhabitants come to make their rounds about the ruins; the catholics have taken possession of the grave-yard, and do not permit any protestant to deposit his bones there. A rich man of this parish threatened to turn a labourer out of it..."Oh, very fine", said the peasant, "I have more privileges in this parish than you, for you cannot deprive me of six feet in the holy island, and you would not get an inch there with all your wealth".

Passing through the ruins of Mount-Shannon, I went to Meelick to Mr. Thomas Burke's; near his house are the ruins of an abbey still contemplated with veneration; near the chapel is a curious kind of cell, in which a man can scarcely turn about; it appears to have been a confessional. Over the tomb is a square hollow stone full of rain, and which is said to possess the virtue of curing corns...what a charming thing it is to travel in Ireland! I hope to be cured of all my complaints when my tour is finished. The banks of this lake were formerly covered with trees, which have been lately felled, and the country now appears naked and barren.

Near Woodford the face of the country begins to mend, and is very fine near Abbey, on the borders of Munster and Connaught. There was an abbey there,

of which the church was dedicated to the Virgin Mary. It was a holiday, and a great number of people were assembled; these are the only ruins that inhabitants have turned to any advantage, to avoid the trouble of building a new chapel. The catholics have lately got permission to use the two chapels on the sides where the road is still entire; the wretchedness of these chapels and of those who frequent them, is beyond description. There were then two or three confessors in the grave-yard employed in hearing confessions; they were sitting on a stone, and held a piece of cloth in their hand to separate the penitent from the crowd; when one had finished, his place was occupied by another. I have been told that the priest receives something for his trouble, and that the price is fixed; this is their chief revenue. They have nothing to live on, but the scanty dues they receive from the people. I was surprised at seeing some who appeared comfortable, who had between one or two hundred a year, besides a tolerable house and dinners innumerable, which they were authorized to get from their parishioners.

The law allows every catholic priest who recants, forty pounds a year, to be paid by the county in which he resides, and the first curacy that falls vacant. The insults which those who profit of this advantage, meet with from the people, deter those whose less rigid principles might induce them to attend to their worldly interest: the law, however, is in their favour, and yet I do not think there are a dozen in all Ireland.

I went to visit the sacred fountain near this abbey: it is not situated like others in the fields, but is surrounded with houses: although I was told what was done there before I went, I could not help laughing at seeing a score women with their petticoats tucked up, and marching one after another on their bare knees. A person must think of the Virgin Mary to avoid getting into a fit of laughter at the grimaces they make, when their knees are pierced by the round hard pebbles, and at their curious method of tucking up their petticoats...ah! ah! Mr. Twiss, what a fine opportunity this would have been for you! what profound and witty remarks you would have made on their legs...but I shall be more discreet than you, Mr. Twiss, I will not tell the publick what the Virgin Mary permitted me to see on that occasion.

At some distance stood an honest soul, who perceiving me to be a stranger, came up to me; I asked him what the water of this fountain was good for? "Ah!", said he, "it is good for everything; it enables the blind to walk, the lame to speak and the deaf to see. If you have any complaints, you need only go round it seven times on your bare knees".

I had no occasion to make the experiment to know the effect of it, for when these poor people went to wash themselves in the fountain, after doing penance, I saw their knees scratched and bloody. Possibly, however, the dread of this severe penance may prevent errors or crimes; if this be the case, I think it better guard against them even by folly, than be afterwards obliged to have recourse to justice to punish them.

On the other side of the rivulet which separates Momonia, or Munster, from Connaught, I though I was no longer in the same country. There was a striking difference in the physiognomy of the people; their dwellings were arranged in a different manner; here their villages were intersected by fields, on the other

side of the stream the houses were crowded together. Following a road on the brow of a hill, I introduced myself at Lord Riverston's, at Pallace.

Tithes are not so oppressive here as in the rest of the country; in Connaught they are levied only on corn and sheep, whereas in Munster the tenth part of the milk, eggs, chickens and vegetables may be claimed by the minister, if he pleases.

At Portumna, on the Shannon, they are building a bridge after the model of those at Wexford, Ross and Waterford; bridges of this kind are beginning to be very common, but they are not on that account the less beautiful. At this place the Shannon falls into Lough-Derg: an old castle, inhabited by the Marquis of Clanricard, may be seen here.

Twelve miles to the westward, there is a charming little lake called Lough Rea, a pretty little town on its banks is called after it, which seems superior to Galway, though the latter is a sea-port; it is a pity they do not make a quay on the bank of the lake, which besides being an ornament would be a charming walk.

I heard something here of a junction to be made between Galway-bay and this lake on one side, and on the other with the Shannon. I do not think it would be very difficult: the country is not very mountainous, and the lake appears to be the highest part of it".

The Ribbonmen of Sliabh Aughty (1798 - 1815)

"The situation around Woodford greatly influenced the history of its inhabitants. In early years the nature of the ground made a military approach extremely laborious and rendered surprise by rapid movement impossible. Thus the great security of this wilderness had encouraged demoralising traffic to a fearful extent, and consequently the people of the district were a semi-barbarous community, leagued together against the laws by a bond of common interest, which in many instances they have observed with fatal fidelity to each other.

During the year 1800 and in the years following it, an association of a treasonable nature existed in the south and west of Ireland, and it may be readily conceived how the neighbourhood we have described, would have become a choosen haunt for the disaffected. Such was the case indeed, as the country around Woodford had been in a state of unusual disturbance. The defective policy force of that day, were found unable to make head against the increasing power of the "Ribbonmen" or "Midnight Robbers", as they were commonly known. The gentry had to defend their houses and the landlords were forced to partition their lands, and to let them in obedience to the agents of those daring legislators, or else submit to see their estates being wasted or untenanted. Among their leaders was the notorious Johnny Gibbons. This outlaw, never known to show mercy to man or beast, sheltered in the seclusion of Woodford for many a day. Gibbons was an outcast from society after 1798, and while the other delinquents had generally received pardon, the ear of mercy was justly

closed to him. He was the only one of the Western Rebels who had been guilty of deliberate bloodshed, and his cruel nature had not only been displayed to those whom he regarded as his enemies, but also, and not infrequently to his misguided companions. For many hears he had infested the wilds of Connemara, but because of the murder of a companion, and his repeated attacks on the peasantry whom he plundered and ill-used, the ruffian became an object of such general detestation, that he was forced to abandon the mountains which for 15 years had sheltered him. The party disturbances, which prevailed in the neighbourhood of Woodford, induced him to seek this as a suitable retreat. Gibbons was soon joined by another ruffian named Garland, who had also been obliged to screen himself from justice.

At length the government was called upon to interfere and a military force was as usual called in. In the winter of 1814, the soldiers in Woodford were relieved by the companions of the 28th Regiment detached from headquarters, who took possession of the temporary barrakcs there. The effects of this military force in Woodford were soon apparent. Captain Frank Kennedy, the young and active commander of the detachment, was powerful in harrassing the insurgents. At first, trusting to the imaginary security of their supporters, they ventured to oppose the army, but the bold and active movements of the young soldier, himself a mountaineer, disconcerted the outlaws. Johnny Gibbons and Garland were finally captured by Capt. Kennedy and his 28th Grenadiers, and paid dearly by hanging, for the way they had terrorised the people of Ireland. Thus after losing many of their leaders, the Ribbonmen gradually retired into the remoter mountains, where the military could not follow them, and left Woodford in a state of comparative tranquility. Richard Bentley concludes: "The good folks of Woodford were left to follow their honest calling, and brew poteen to their hearts content, without being harried by spies and soldiers".

Note:-

These "Stories" were published in London by Richard Bentley and entitled "Standard Novels", though in modern terms nearer to romantic autobiotgraphy, or a type of historical non-fictional story of adventures, and were written around the period before and after the Battle of Waterloo (1812), hence the title.

Number 31 in the series was written by a Captain Frank Kennedy, who came to Woodford in the winter of 1814, as the leader of the 28th Regiment Grenadiers, to defeat "the Ribbonmen" who were particularly strong around that area at the time, as this extract shows. The Ribbonmen were originally the Catholic "Defenders" in the North of Ireland, set up as result of the persecution from the Protestant "Peep O Day Boys" in the 1790s, and as Seamus MacEneany has explained in "The Ultachs", these latter Ulster Catholics had to leave their homes and move south, including a huge contingent to the Sliabh Aughty area near Woodford. Had the subsequent rise of the Ribbonmen in the south of Ireland from 1800, any connection with the Ultachs who came down during that same period (1798-1843), or more particularly in that vast innaccessible mountain terrain alongside Lough Derg, from Scariff to Gort, and Loughrea to Woodford, where the Ultachs eventually settled?

While the geographical characteristics were doubtless one of the causes as to

why the Sliabh Aughty region became such a long-lasting haunt for the Ribbonmen, and the arrival of so many embittered Ulster chatholics probably helped also, Bentley's statement that "the people of the district were a community, leagued together against the laws, by a bond of common interest", may well provide the primary reason. Indeed, it is a description that was heard again repeatedly during the Land War, and could well provide the historical answer, as to why the community around Woodford provided such stalward defiance of British Laws and Landlord Rule, both after the Act of Union (1800) and during "The Plan of Campaign" (1886), "leagued together" as Bentley says "with fatal fidelity to each other".

More interesting by far than Bentley's typical imperialist view, however, is Captain Kennedy's own account of his adventurous stay in Woodford (1814-1815). I am relying here on quotations form the book, and my memory of the story, which I read many years ago. Though we know little about Capt. Kennedy himself, his terminology seems to indicate Scottish nationality, and his apparant Highland background made him feel very much at home "neath Aughty's slopes". Thus he writes: "To a person interested in mountain scenery, I know of no part of Ireland more attractive than this secluded place. Woodford village is situated in a county west of the Shannon, and in one of the wildest districts of a disturbed barony". He described walking to the "lake in the mountain" (Lough Atorick evidently) to fish for "gillaroo trout" and how he passed a "Priests Cairn" where a "Catholic Clergyman had perished in a snowstorm"; "his corpse was not found for several weeks, and the stones gradually accumulated near the place as a landmark on the mountain Toorleitra". Later he entered "a little dell used as a temporary summer residence or "boville" (?) by one "Dr. McSplint" who treated him to "mountain dew and Woodford mutton". He describes his host as being "almost naked for the time of year" (Spring 1815) only wearing a "tattered shirt and short wollen drawers", obviously a fit and naturally healthy doctor! They talked about the "illicit distillation of poteen" and the use of "cleave or pannier" and the "loys" or narrow spades. After an enjoyable evening's fishing in Loughatorick, Capt. Kennedy then began the five mile walk home in the twilight, only to stumble unsuspectingly into a camp of Ribbonmen, who quickly captured him and held him as prisoner. His account of his imprisonment and eventual release by two of the men whom he had befriended, is an intriguing adventure story, as is the rest of his struggle against Garland and Gibbons, whom he eventually captured alive and hanged in Woodford. That they were not too popular among the other Ribbonmen or local people, became apparent, as does the fact that despite the British Army's claim of success subsequently, the Ribbonmen still controlled the mountains, and were even more united after the loss of the renegade outlaws, Gibbons and Garland. Indeed a fitting finale to this story is how Capt. Kennedy obtained a pardon for the two Ribbonmen who freed him, and how all three left Woodford together to fight in the Nepoleonic Wars.

Postscript:-

I wish to thank Sr. Patricia, Mercy Convent, Ballinasloe, and Marian Lyons, N.T., for their help with this article.

Cathal Stanley

An Fiadóir, Mac Suibhne

Antoine Rafturaí (1784 - 1835)

Molaim go deo an crann agair 's an seol
'S an tslinn do bheir leigeann do'n chursa,
An t-úgham san spól 's an lámh-clár i gcóir
An garumna, na "runners" 'san túirne.
Tá'n uirlis le fágháil, a gcion 's a gcáil
'S, an figheadóir, Mac Mhuire da chumhdach;
'Sé a chuirfeadh brat brághad ar feara is ar mhnáibh,
Ins gach bealach, 'n-a gcodladh 's'n-a ndúiseacht.

Níl bruinneall dá bhreághthacht ar chruinniu nó báire
ar a capall, nach bhfoilfeadh dí, fúithi,
Pillin breágh árd, is a beilt fá n-a lár
Ribíní, rufaí is gúna;
A fállaing bhreagh thláit, 's a mbíonn ar a brághaid,
'Sé'n seól do bheir fásga dá glúnaí,
'S an fear thréis bháis dhá dheasú ar an gclár
Gur deiside é sgiorta dá chungnam.

Amach as a lár a thigeas gach áirge,
An carpet, an phluid, is an súsa,
An muslin 's is gás, seól loigne 'gus báid,
'S go ngléasann sé uaisle na cúige.
An céimbric 's an láun, center croisbárr
'S na síodá ghnídh haibíd is gúna,
An ceasamar bán 's an bhelbhet is fearr
Dár chaith riamh iarla nó diúca.

Greásaidhe ar stól mur ndéanfadh sé ach bróg
Ba mhian le mná óga bheit i ndáil léis,
Nó táilliúir ar bórd 's a shisiúr i gcóir
Mur ngearradh sé ach cóta nó cába;
Ní cháinfead aon tsórt, níl baint agam dó,
Ach sé'n figheadóir a shárugh an ríoghacht,
Ba mhaith é, i dtigh an oil, fear chaithe an spóil
Tà sonas is sógh ó Criost air.

Ní'l file ná bárd ó'n t-Sionainn go tráigh
Nach leigfidh mé an seanchus fútha,
'S mur bhfuil sé sáthach árd, ó bhuail mé an lámh
gileóchadh mé beagáinín cungnaimh.
Ní'l agam le rádh ar fad insan gcás,
Ach an Brianach nár chruthaigh sé fiúntach,
Arís go lá'n bháis fhad is mhaireas Clann Ádhamh
Ní mholfad aon fhear as a dhúthaigh.

Má tharraing sé siar bhi fear ar an sliabh,
A thógfadh go sgiobtha mo pháirt-se,
De shlíocht Chloinne Mhíl' o thosach an t-saoghail
Nár eitigh fear riamh faoi chárta.
Bheirim dó an chraobh is go mairidh sé í,
'S go bhfeicidh Dia sonas is ádh air,
'S go deimhin, a Shuibhne, tá Rafturái buideach dhíot,
Agus ólfaidh ins gach baile do shláinte.

Nóta:-

Seán MacSuibhne an t-ainm a bhí air an fiadoír, agus bhí sé ina chonaí í nGraigh na Muilte Iarainn le feabhas a cháirde. 'Ultach' ab ea a chlann, agus is soiléir go raibh meas mor ag Rafturai aír.

Cathal Ó Stanlaigh

Sweeney, The Weaver

I

The staff I will praise, and the loom all its days,
the reeds with the threads free-flowing,
shuttle and gears and the handboard that steers,
beam, runners and spinning wheel going;
The machine is the same, in love and in fame,
and the weaver, Mary's Son will protect him,
weaving neckcloths so fine, men and women to shine,
in every road between sleeping and waking.

II

No colléen so rare, at hurling or fair,
but in style, on her horse clothed down,
a fine high pillion and a belt round her middle,
with the ribbons and frills for her gown;
Her soft, pliant cloak and collar round her throat,
the loom's mantle for covering her knees,
and the man after death, laid out on the deck,
looks neater with a robe for his ease.

III

From the heart of the loom, comes every such bloom,
the carpet, the blanket and quilt,
muslin, gauze-lace, cotton sailing with grace,
Connacht nobles thus dressed to the hilt;
Cambric-linen and lawn, on centre cross-bar,
silks that make habit and gown,
cashmere in white, the best velvet by far,
Duke or Earl ever wore with renown.

IV

Though a shoemaker fool, with one shoe and a stool,
yet young damsels like near him to dote,
or a tailor if able, with scissors and table,
just to cut out a cape or a coat;
I dispraise neither sort, with whom I've no resort,
but the weaver beats all in the kingdom,
Our spool-thrower too, tops the public-house crew,
Christs' happiness and good cheer upon him.

V

Neither poet nor bard, from Shannon to strand,
but will hear the weaver's story,
and if inadequately grand, from this writer's hand,
then some other, may add to his glory;
I've nothing further to trace, with regard to this case,
except O'Brien proved rather unfair,
so while I live in good grace, during clan Adam's race,
such an outsider, I will always beware.

VI

If he went to the west, this mountain man's rest,
he would quickly take my part,
of the Milesian clan, since the world began,
nor refused any man for a quart;
I gave him the branch, may he it enhance,
with God's serenity and wealth,
O'Sweeny so true, Raftery is grateful to you,
and will drink in every town to your health.

Antony Raftery (1784-1835) often visited Woodford, where he enjoyed the hospitality and great skill of his friend, John Sweeney, the weaver. I hope this translation into modern verse catches some of the rhythm and internal rhyme of Gaelic metre, as well as the meaning and spirit of the original.
Sweeney lived on Barkhill, where the old National School now stands. Was he the ancestor of all the Sweeneys of East-Galway?

Cathal Stanley

Note:-

This is an attempted translation into modern verse and language, of Antony Raftery's poem, and I have tried to preserve the internal rhyme of alternative lines, without losing the meaning and spirit of the original Gaelic. I have entitled the translation 'Sweeney, The Weaver', because while it may be easily seen that the theme is about weaving in general, on closer study one realizes that it is really a tribute of praise to Raftery's great friend and weaver par-excellence,

John Sweeney. John lived in Barkhill, where the old town of Woodford was situated in those days, in a house where the former Boy's National School now stands, and which is owned by The Alternative Energy Co. at present. The Sweeneys were originally 'Ultachs', and brought their craft with them from Ulster, probably Donegal. Are the numerous Sweeneys living nowadays in Loughrea, Ballinasloe, Fohenagh and Ahascragh the descendants of the Weaver, or his family, perhaps? Who the "O'Brien" referred to in verse five is, is not clear, though coming 'West' would indicate the Whitegate, Mountshannon or Scariff region, perhaps one of Edna's ancestors? Antony Raftery (1784-1835) himself needs no introduction hopefully, and in addition to travelling all over South-East Galway, he visited Woodford frequently via the old road by Loughatorick. He evidently enjoyed the hospitality and skill of his loyal friend, John Sweeney, whose name is still recalled by the older residents of Woodford (see reference in Tom Gorman's 'Local Traditions' from the Folklore Commission Questionnaire 1938/39, where it mentions the linen industry at Mountshannon Daly, McDermotts at Reynclamper, and the names of other local flax weavers also Killimor). "Loughrea had about 2 score weavers then", according to Douglas Hyde, in his "Abhraín an Reachtúire" (Gill 1903).

Cathal Stanley

The Ultachs'

Seamus McEneany

Ultach (commonly pronouched 'Owltach' in locality.) is roughly derived from the Gaelic word "Ulach", meaning an Ulster person, and was the local term given to people from South Ulster - mainly Monaghan and Cavan, who started to arrive in the area in large numbers from then until well into the nineteenth century. They are important in local history as they were the largest group of people from another province ever to settle in the old parish of Balinakill and South East Galway. The "Western News" writing during the Land War period of 1886 states that about 100, or nearly 20% of the total number of families in the parish were of Ulster stock and were mainly concentrated in the areas South and West of Woodford.

In order to try and understand the reasons for such a great influx of people, into what was then a rather remote area, we must look at the political and social history of Ireland prior to that time with particular reference to counties Monaghan and Cavan.

After the English conquest of Ireland in the seventeenth century, most of the fertile lands of Leinster, the Midlands, and particularly of Ulster were given to English and Scottish planters, - administrators and military men who had given service to the Crown and were paid with land, confiscated from the Irish. Some were given large estates averaging around 3,000 acres which they let mainly to Scottish or English settlers - many of whom were tough ex-soldiers who had little feeling for the people that had been dispossessed. Some of the Irish were allowed to rent back parts of their original holdings but very many were made homeless, some to die of starvation. This was the beginning of the landlord system in the demolition of which South-East Galway later played such an important part.

Looking back also at the bloodshed of that period we have to admit that the Catholic Irish could be just as ruthless and cruel to their captives as the Cromwellian forces were to them in 1649. During and after the initially successful rising against the English settlers in 1641 there are stories documented of brutal murders and torturing of captured Protestant men, women and children, stemming from pure hate of the alien people who had stolen their land. The fear of each other because of such incidents, became so ingrained in the minds of Catholics, and Protestants in particular, that is has survived for over three hundred years to the present day.

The introduction of the Penal Laws later made the Protestant community feel more secure, and their strong work ethic was evident in the success over the years of the agricultural and in particular the linen export trade from Ireland, which benefited both communities. The latter part of the eighteenth century saw much political activity and change in Ireland, with demands for a greater political automony by Grattan and, later, by the United Irishmen. The dream of the latter of uniting Protestant and Catholic together to break the bond with Britain was shattered by serious outbreaks of sectarian strife in Ulster in the seventeenth-nineties.

At a time when the population, Catholic and Protestant, was growing at a great rate and after the easing of restrictions on cattle exports, the demand for land was growing rapidly. Some relaxation of the Penal Laws was taking place. Although still denied basic civil rights to vote, to sit in parliament, to enter certain professions or to carry arms, the Catholics had been allowed by law in 1778 to lease extra agricultural land and by 1782 could actually purchase land on the same conditions as Protestants. This of course sent land prices and rents soaring. The competition to buy land was particularly acute in Ulster where Catholics in many cases were outbidding Protestants for small-holdings. The alarmed reaction of Protestant farmers to this threat saw the formation of Protestant secret societies such as the Peep O'Day Boys later to become the nucleus of the Orange Order. The aim of these armed gangs was the intimidation of the Catholic tenants with the ultimate aim of driving them out of the area altogether. They usually struck at night breaking fences, stealing cattle, and setting fire to property and crops. The Catholics retaliated, and formed groups known as Defenders, and after many skirmishes the badly-equipped Defenders suffered a major defeat near the Monaghan/Armagh border in 1795, known as the Battle of the Diamond. The result had severe consequences for the losers and their supporters and from among the victors quickly emerged the Orange Order, whose aim was to copper-fasten the grip of the political and religious establishment on the economy. Their members' Oath of Allegiance to the Crown was firmly based on the condition that it supported only the Protestant interest. Lodges were founded all over Ulster, the first in Co. Monaghan in 1786 around the Clones, Monaghan, Ballybay, Cootehill area, which contained the greatest concentration of Protestant farmers. This was the district which some decades before had been the scene of bitter opposition to opportunistic landlords by Catholic and Protestant tenants alike, and it was also the general area from which most of the Woodford Ultachs originated.

The years following were considered the worst period of rural sectarian strife ever in Ulster history, with Catholic secret societies such as the Ribbonmen

striking back, and thereby generating still further Protestant antigonism towards the weaker community. For them there was no protection, no police force, and in most cases the magistrates were either members, or at least supporters of the new Orange Order, and it is written of that period that:

"it is unknown for a Catholic to be found innocent,
or a Protestant to be found guilty of any crime".

For the guilty it was the death penalty or deportation for even relatively minor offences.

Thousands of young men left the area joining continental armies or the United Irishmen or the Militia, and many were among the 30,000 killed during the short-lived 1798 Rebellion.

The situation became unbearable for many Catholic farmers and they began to look around for a less hostile area in which to live, many heading towards the poorer lands of Mayo Galway, and Clare.

Around that time it is said that Sir Thomas Burke of Marble Hill, realising the potential of the waste land on his estate, put advertisements in "The Freeman's Journal" offering mountain land for sale at around five shillings an acre. The fact that he was a Catholic landlord and his tenants almost exclusively Catholic obviously appealed to the Northern people, so many of them sold out and set off over rocky roads towards South East Galway. Many families were probably related or close friends, so they travelled in large convoys for protection and to assist each other. It is said they came prepared for all eventualities, not knowing what to expect on arrival.

They travelled, - grandparents, parents, and children, loaded with personal belongings on horses and carts, bringing things like linen spinning wheels, looms, stone querns for grinding corn and all types of farm implements. Apart from domestic animals it is documented that they even brought their cattle with them which they had specially shod for the long journey.

During their travels they were given hospitality by sympathetic people who sometimes allowed them to sleep in their houses. Some hosts were rather overcareful with the strangers such as in Co. Tipperary where, it is said, they secured their feet at night in stocks fixed to the beds - just in case.

On arrival at the foothills of the Slieve Aughty mountains the weary travellers must have been taken aback at the quality of the land offered to them, but after all they had been through previously, it probably seemsed like the "promised land", among their fellow co-religionists and the apparent peace and tranquility of the area. Having had a warm welcome from Sir Thomas who was known as a shrewd but kindly man, liked by his tenants and progressive in his ideas for land reclamation, road making and tree planting, they set about doing deals and picking out the best of what was available. Burke obviously recognised the material benefits in allowing the newcomers into the area but he probably never thought of the problems they would cause later on his estate.

It is said that most of the migrants were fairly well off and this could well be so judging by the standard of the stone houses they built - many of which remain today, and the fact that they were able to survive over the long period it took to build houses, outbuildings, and reclaim enough land to grow crops. Some of the families engaged in money-lending, which was common practice back in Monaghan. The land sold to them was as far as we know, previously uninha-

bited, generally wet barren commonage used for grazing purposes by the locals who apparently were not too pleased at the idea of this land being taken from them and given to strangers.

The arrival of this band of settlers with strange accents and customs must have generated a great deal of curiosity and unease among the natives of Woodford, and as more and more Ulstermen began to arrive in the area they understandably commenced to view the situation with alarm. It must be remembered that the Woodford iron industry had only recently closed down and the already overpopulated parish of 15,000 people was feeling the results. Secondly, cattle prices were rising steadily and the people needed all the extra pasture land they could get. W.S. Blunt reports that at one stage the Woodford people threatened to drive out or burn out the newcomers, but the threats were never carried out, probably due to the intervention of the clergy. The unfortunate "Ultachs" as they were now being referred to locally, found themselves innocently caught up in a row between the landlord and their new neighbours, which simmered for many years afterwards.

Over the years, the Ultachs quietly went about their business and began to earn the respect of the people, as the results of their labours emerged. They were obviously very hard workers, especially the early "pioneers" who had to clear away rocks and heather, make drains, build walls and construct lime kilns for burning limestone - which they bought from people in Ballinagar and the Shannonside areas - carrying it back over long distances to make fertiliser for the acid land.

1. When, after much hardship the farms were finally made productive the Ultach families were annoyed to find that they now had to pay higher rents on the houses they had built and on the land they had created. Most of them now, like their neighbours though for different reasons, developed a lessening of respect for their new landlord, Colonel Sir John Burke who succeeded to the estate on the death of his father in 1813. Sir John was a reasonable, but strict disciplinarian who had been made Colonel of the 98th Regiment (the precursor of the Connaught Rangers) - a force of 1000 men recruited from his tenants by Sir Thomas - a staunch supporter of the Crown, and had seen service with them in North America, Canada and the Indies.

By now tidy little farms were emerging from the previously barren mountainside, growing potatoes, root-crops and even wheat. The Ultachs had introduced flax growing for the making of linen and the flax seed as a food for cattle. The introduction of imported cotton at the end of the nineteenth century had destroyed the Irish linen industry, which was mainly concentrated in Ulster, but the Woodford Ultachs still made linen for their own use up to the beginning of this century. Raftery the famous wandering poet wrote a poem in praise of one of the weavers, Sweeney, who lived at Barkhill, and was considered an excellent craftsman. (See Sweeney, the Weaver). Many of the womenfolk were also skilled in lace-making.

It is said that the Ultachs introduced the idea to the area of digging off the top heathery sods and after drying, burning them and using the ash as fertiliser for crops. Small pockets of this ash can still be found around Allendarra. It appears, initially at least, to have been very successful as the newcomers were able to grow good crops on land previously considered useless. It is believed

that the ash acted also as a blight preventative and it is a fact that the Ultachs had excellent crops of potatoes and grain during the Great Famine. As well as being able to supply their own needs some farmers were able to supply seed potatoes to the Portumna Market where it is said they were mobbed and treated as heroes. Population figures for the parish duing the Famine show that the death rate in the Ultagh townlands was extremely low compared to that of the more fertile districts.

Many of the original families eventually left the Woodford area, or emigrated after a generation or so, and their small-holdings were bought by new Ulster people who were still undergoing sectarian harassment back home. At the beginning of the nineteenth century a big campaign was started in South Ulster by the Established Church to try and win converts from among the downtrodden Catholics by means of enticing offers of money and extra land by some of the landlords and their agents, and by free education for Catholic children in Protestant schools. At one meeting in Cavan in 1827 they succeeded in getting 450 Catholic adults to publicly renounce their faith. As the movement spread, so also did the Orange bigotry and intimidation against those who refused to change. This was followed by numerous incidents of violence and bloodshed as the campaign by Catholics against the payment of tithes to Church of Ireland clergymen got under way.

The last of the Ultach families to arrive in Woodford around 1843, told their grandchildren stories of the terror they were subjected to before they left and the old people still relate what was supposed to be an ancient prophesy, but which probably originated among the Ultachs themselves, part of which is that Ireland would experience a great civil war, that the country would be overrun by Orangemen wading through the blood of Catholics, but that "no blood would flow between Ben (Hill) and Bow (River)" - the area in which Woodford is situated, and in which the Ulster Catholics felt safe. It took many years before the Ultachs were fully accepted into the local community. They tended to marry among themselves and even in Bark Hill cemetery their quite substantial headstones are grouped around the same area.

Like many Ulster people they were a hardworking, thrifty, strongminded group who had suffered much hardship because of their principles and religious beliefs and it can be said that they contributed a fair share of new ideas to the area and were certainly instrumental in bringing the rent dispute with Burke to a head in 1886, having been the initial cause of the change in local attitude to his grandfather. Sir Henry like his father was a strict disciplinarian and was one of the first landlords selected by his colleagues to adopt a get tough policy with tenants who adopted the 'Plan of Campaign' tactics of witholding rent until their reasonable demands for reduction were met. (This was well before the 'Plan of Campaign' was officially launched in October of that year).

On a bitterly cold showery February day in 1886 the Catholic landlord's agents and emergency men accompanied by a large force of police, followed by a jeering crowd of about 5000 people, set out for Allendarra to evict Francis O'Farrell - one of his Ultagh tenants and ironically father of two priests - the first ever from the area to be ordained. When he flatly refused to pay except on the conditions adopted by the National League the bailiffs set to work and after about an hour succeeded in breaking through the barricaded door and win-

dows. The furniture was thrown out, the fire quenched and the family ejected amid scenes of great anger from the crowd who were barely restrained by ther local clergy and tenant leaders. This was the first eviction to be resisted, in a year that was to become a very action-filled one in the history of South-East Galway.

As the rain and sleet continued, the eviction party arrived at the small homestead of another Ultagh, John McCabe where the resistance party appeared much more prepared and determined. Luckily just after the old man refused to pay legal costs and the action was about to start, the bailiff, Carroll, in a voice filled with fear and emotion suddenly announced that he was resigning and the eviction was stopped.

There followed great scenes of jubilation and later thousands of people marched behind brass bands from all over Galway, to Woodford for a mass meeting to celebrate what to them was the first victory against their landlord - a Catholic, aided by emergency men - coincidentally from Cavan - Ultachs of a different colour - Orangemen recruited to do the dirty work in the South. Were they aware that they were probably evicting the grandsons of the people their grandfathers had terrorised back in Ulster eighty or ninety years before? By now locals and Ultachs were fully united against the abuses of landlordism.

The Ultach families occupied almost all of the townlands of Allendarra East and West, Lowertown/Ulicks Mountain and areas to the North and West of Loughatorick. Some also lived in Woodford town which was the centre of the Burke estste. Among the families we find the following surnames:-

Allen, Benn, Brady, Cheevers, Campbell, Cooney, Cooley, Connolly, Colloton, Collins, Cavanagh or Kavanagh, Clarke, Cunningham, Daly, Duffy, Dempsey, Finnegan, Finlay, Garrigan, Graney, Greenan, Hayes, Hamill, Jordan, Kealy, King, Kelehan, Lawless, Leonard, Loughnane, Lennon, Mallon, Melia, Mohan, Mooney, Murray, Murphy, Mullen, McGuire, McCabe, McGann, McBride, McMahon, McKeon, McEneany, McHugh, or McGoe, McCole, McGrath, McDermott, O'Donnell, O'Farrell, O'Reilly, Owens, Shiel, Sheridan, Sweeney, Shannon, Ward.

Among the families listed, many of which are still extant in Woodford and all over E. Galway, we see old Irish surnames found in Ulster from as far back as history can go, as well as some Scottish names, of people who came to Ireland as mercenary soldiers to the Ulster chieftains. The distinct Northern accent and expressions survived until this century and are remembered by the older people of the district.

Over the years emigration and the difficulties of making a satisfactory living in the area, took their toll and very few Ultach families now remain in their original homesteads, but thousands of their descendants have become prosperous and respected citizens of their adopted countries throughout the world. New forests now cover much of the land they reclaimed and, sadly, much has been reclaimed back by the mountain. However, this process is now being halted and history is repeating itself with the recent arrival in those townlands of small numbers of a new type of "Ultach" - Ó Mhór Rionn na hEorpa - creative and industrious new settlers appreciative of the peace, and freedom from pollution this remote and lovely unspoiled area has to offer.

Names and Surnames

According to Griffith's Valuation, 1856, the following were the most numerous surnames of households in the "civil" parish of Ballynakill i.e. the present parishes of Woodford and Ballinakill plus a section of Abbey/Duniry:

Daly	48	Murray	15	Shiel	12
Cuohy	35	Gorman	14	Abberton	11
Burke	34	Hickey	14	Cannon	11
Kelly	25	Donnelly	13	Larkin	11
Moran	20	Egan	13	Rafferty	11
Lyons	17	Hayes	13	Conway	10
Mohan	16	Mullen	13	Dervan	10
Conroy	15	Kennedy	12	Donahoe	10
				Page	10
				Tully	10

The majority of these surnames are of local Galway origin. Such names as Gorman, Hickey, Kennedy probably derive from Clare or Tipperary (although one Hickey family claims to come from Kerry). At least some of the Murrays are "Ultachs" (the only such, it was said locally, to have had any money on arrival), and, according to Dr. Mac Lysaght the leading authority, so also are the Abbertons.

Donnelly is a mainly Tyrone name, with an Offaly branch, but the name is found in Galway and Tipperary as far back as the 14th and 16th centuries. Shiel is principally a Donegal name, but is so common in south-east Galway that it must be long established there, whether or not the tradition is correct that the first bearers of the name entered the district with the armies of O'Neill and O'Donnell.

Cannon (Ó Cannàin) is an Uí Mháine name, although some claim that it was also the name of Welsh ironworkers who came to the Woodford works in the late 17th century. There is general agreement that the surnames of Tamplin (now extinct), Pierce, Walsh of Alleendara, and Seymour are of this latter origin, and so also, probably, is Kemple.

The assigning of a definite place of origin to surnames, can be as tricky as deciding the correct form and meaning of a placename, and family tradition here, where it survives, is often the surest guide. For instance, of two families of McMahons of Woodford, one is "Ultach", but the other from east Clare. The English names of Stanley and Porter are found in various parts of Ireland since medieval times, but in fact the Stanleys came to Woodford in the last century from north Tipperary (lured partly by an interest in traditional Irish music). A reference to an ancient tree located at Killeen says that it was planted there by "one Porter, one of Cromwell's soldiers", though the first Porter locally was an Anglican Clergyman in Portumna. Page is another name of English origin found in Ireland since the middle ages, but located in the Woodford region for up to 300 years. The name of Saunders no longer survives locally, though the memory is preserved in Saunders' Fort, of Land War fame; it is of English, or possibly Welsh origin.

With the heavy decline in population since teh 1840's and 1850's, it is scarcely surprising that many surnames then found locally no longer survive. The Finlays have gone from Ulick's Mountain, and the Fahys of Douras are no longer the small army they once were. As against this, it is hard to credit that in 1856 the Garveys consisted of one solitary household.

If there is a native of the parish, born of Woodford parents, who cannot trace a Fahy, a Tuohy or a Burke among his ancestors, the answer must be that he hasn't tried hard enough.

Some future historian may have the task of puzzling out how, or whence, the surnames of Hilti, Hoffman, Musclearn, and Tomrop, recorded in current voters' lists, arrived in Woodford.

As well as the official records of local names in the Poor Law Inquiry 1833-36 (principal tenants only), the tithe Applotment Books 1844, Griffith's Valuation 1856, National School roll-books, and the earliest surviving complete census return 1901, Woodford has the special feature of a parish census conducted by Fr. Costello shortly after his arrival as PP in Woodford in 1889.

Another source of information, much consulted by American and Irish searchers after "roots", is the parish register. The Woodford baptism and marriage registers go back to 1820/21, but the warning should be issued that there are long gaps in the records, and that even where no gaps are apparent, there is reason to doubt whether the returns are comprehensive. Difficulties may also be encountered in deciphering some of the more "crabbit" handwriting or faded ink. Nevertheless much information of personal or wider interest subsists.

One of the general impressions from the registers is that our ancestors used a more limited range of Christian names. If one takes John, Patrick, Michael, Thomas, James and William, for the males, and Mary, Bridget, Anne, Catherine, Margaret and Elizabeth, for the females, one has probably included the bulk of the population of the time. Names such as Joseph and Anthony, common enough nowadays, were little used.

Another interesting feature is some less common Christian names, usually found in association with "Ultach" surnames e.g. Bernard/Brian, Terence, Alexander, Eugene/Owen, Philip, Ferdinand/Fardy and Ross for the men, and Rose among the women.

Also noticeable is the persistence of certain Christian names in particular families e.g. David Page, David Hickey, Philip Murray, Andrew Moran, Martin White, Nicholas Dillon, Eugene Canally, Stephen Stewart, Matthew Grady, Laurence Shiel, Robert Watson. In former times the practice of naming children after their ancestors was of course more commonly followed than nowadays.

A number of Irish communities have in recent years, with assistance from official sources, tackled the formidable task of producing indexes of parish registers, and of recording the inscriptions on the tombstones in local cemeteries. It is to be hoped that sooner or later a similar undertaking will be embarked on for Woodford and East Galway, perhaps extending also to school roll-books. Such compilations would greatly facilitate the efforts of tracers of genealogies, whether Irish or Irish-descended, as well as being of value to the local historian.

Editor's Note- The Woodford Heritage Group plan such an undertaking and intend to preserve the records in their new Heritage Centre.

Maps and Placenames

The earliest map showing any significant detail of the district is Petty's map of Co. Galway. Although not published till 1683, there is reason to suppose that it is based on a survey made in 1636.

The most striking feature of this map is the absence of any mention of Woodford; Ballinakill is not given either, except as the name of the parish. At a quick glance, the map suggests that the Woodford end of the old (civil) parish of Ballinakill, in comparison with the Ballinakill/Abbey end and with the rest of the county east of the Corrib, was thinly populated. Probably such parts as did not consist of mountain or bog were heavily wooded.

A church is shown between "Carrowrow" and "Lissinisky", and a castle at "Coolefin". "Clondegaif" is shown, but not its castle. The spelling is at times difficult; it takes a while to identify "Bohollock" and "Quos" as Bolag and Coose.

A collection of Maps of the Roads of Ireland was published in 1778, based on surveys made in 1777. The main features shown, apart from towns and roads, are gentlemen's mansions located close to the roads. Thus Woodford has "Crosdale Esq" and Marble Hill "J Burke Esq". Balinagar and Lisdurra, Aylesward; Abbeyville, Reaghan, Foxhill, Meelick, Tintrim, all Burkes; Ballydugan, Burke; Flower Hill, Lord Riverston; Streamstown, Ballindrimny, Lamberts; Culleen, Listove, Kellys; Mount Pleasant, Dalystown, Dalys; Nutgrove, Donnellan; Spring Garden, Pearce; Summerhill, Persse; Druesboro, Drues; Rahmes, Brady; Dirry, French; Hetlone (sic), Hamilton; Heronsbrooke, Heron; Queenborough, Earl of Louth; Ramore, Browne; Carha, Ward; Clonbam, Molloy.

Later such maps as Larkin's "Grand Jury" map of Co. Galway, 1819, were welcomed as, among other things, discouraging "jobs", meaning, not the reduction of employment, but the prevention of jobbery and corruption, in the form of fraudulent claims by road constructors for work done, or alleged to be done.

But all previous maps were superseded by the 6" maps produced by the Ordnance Survey, which covered South-East Galway in 1838. These maps show much interesting detail, such as long-abandoned homesteads; wells and limekilns; old placenames since forgotten.

The Ordnance Survey Office contains Name Books giving the names and brief descriptions of townlands and other features, as recorded by the surveyors. Particular notice was taken of ring forts (the remains of early Christian and mediaeval habitations, consisting of a ring of earth), or, as they were known at that time, "Danish forts".

A sample of comments from the Naas Books is given below.

The Bay (Reynclamper) -...part of a small river on which there is a dyke for the purpose of conveying water to a tuck mill.. - The Bay (Woodford)...a portion of the river at the village of Woodford, about 4 chains wide, with an island;

hereabouts King James and his army passed over (by a ford) from which this Village derived that name...

- The Lodge (Clonmoylan) - A house, representing the general form of R.C. chapel, it is the residence of Mr. Connolly. Friars Island is about 12 chains northeast of it, on which there is a house built for the purpose of Gentlemen and Ladies, whilst taking pleasure in boats on the Lough.

- The Royal George (Derrygill) - A peice of plantation so called, it is said to represent the side of the ship called the Royal George which sunk off Spit Head (this was designed by a relation of one of the crew) in commemoration of a friend who perished in the wreck. - The Meeting Bush (Bolag) - A large bush on the south side of a road. Tradition says that many people were beaten here by ghosts. - The Pretender (Drumnamuckla South) - Spring well so called but no information can be obtained respecting it.

- The Tanyard - About 10 chains northwest of Woodford village...a burying place for strangers. Most probably there was a tanyard here some time ago, but no trace now. - The Togher -...the south end of Woodford village. - Upper Village (Derryoober) - A collection of miserable houses but does not represent any matters worthy of remark. There is the remains of an old furnace about 10 chains northwest of the village. - Coose North -... the southeast end is under cultivation, known by Dunbark and Slaughtee... - Drummin - A small townland partially cultivated, being chiefly composed of rough boggy land and furze; a few houses in the north end are called Drummin Village, another small collection in the south end known by Hannis park, there is nothing remarkable in the townland. - Knockauncarragh -...a small lough in the end is known by Drummnakhutha and a Saint's well called John's Well is about 6 chains north of the lough... - Kilcrimple - The most ancient burying place in the parish or country and the parish of Ballinakill was originally called Kilcrimple..."

There are also preserved the Ordanance Survey Letters written by John O'Donovan and his colleagues, one of whom remarked that the parish of Ballinakill entailed more work than a whole barony in Co. Kildare. The Letters are largely concerned with churches, castles, and other antiquities:

"...In Doorus townland (dubh ros) there is a burying ground, in which none of those whom I consulted remembers to have at any period, seen any part of the walls of a church standing. There is a tree at it called Bell (bile?) tree, a name that originated in a tradition among the people, who say that a bell used to be heard every seven years ringing in it. Local information says there was a friary near the grave yard, situated at a mound of earth which lies partly effaced in an adjacent field..."

The Valuation Office contains records and maps of all changes in the ownership and occupation of each plot of agricultural land in Ireland since about 1860.

In 1938/9 the Irish Folklore Commission conducted through the National Schools a nation-wide questionnaire on many aspects of folklore and local history, including placenames and field-names. Although much information was gathered, it is certain that very much more remains unrecorded, even still, and there would be ample scope for a fresh investigation of local placenames and fieldnames.

Thomas O Gormain

The Famine in Loughrea Poor Law Union

by Michael Mac Mahon

Popular accounts of the Great Famine attribute destitution, disease and death to the failure of the potato crop in the winter of 1845 and '46. It must be remembered, however, that long before the 'blight' ravaged the main staple of the Irish diet, a large portion of the population stood on the brink of starvation. An observer of the Irish economy wrote in 1830 that the condition of the poor was wretched in the extreme; "their cabins which are of the most miserable description are mostly unprovided with anything that can be called furniture; in many families there are no such things as bedclothes and in some instances the children have not a single rag to cover their nakedness.

One of the chief reasons for the decline in the conditions of the people was the reckless subdivision of estates which took place throughout the first part of the century. The cottier's holding, consisting of not more than one acre represented the lowest stage of land division, and it is estimated that there were 65,000 of these in the country in 1845. Pressure of population caused intense demand for potato plots; at the same time it ensured that wages were low, and in many cases the rent for the potato plot was bartered in exchange for the cottier's labour. The fragmentation of holdings also facilitated a sharp increase in population, for families could exist, although at a mere subsistence level, on a patch of potatoes.

In the Barony of Leitrim, the 1841 Census shows that the population stood at 32,590 persons comprising 5,495 families. About half of this number lived in the civil parish of Ballinakill. Of these, 1702 families were living in what were officially described as "fourth-class houses, mud cabins having only one room. A further 2,597 families were living in third-class houses; these were a better type of cottage, still built of mud but varying from two to four rooms". Ever since 1815, when grain prices fell dramatically, economic activity continued to decline and by 1841 almost half of the population of the country depended on the potato for sustenance. In 1836, a Commissioin set up to enquire into the conditions of the poor in Ireland warned that a failure of the potato crop would result in widespread famine.

In response to the Commission's report the British Parliament passed the Irish Poor Relief Act of 1838. The Act was designed to introduce a Poor Law system such as was already operating in Britain. Under the scheme, the country was divided up into Poor Law Unions composed of convenient groupings of District Electoral Divisions. Each Union was to have a Workhouse where the destitute poor or paupers as they were officially termed, could be housed and set to employment, hence the name "Workhouse". Only persons who became inmates of the workhouse could receive gratuitous 'assistance'. The management of each Union was entrusted to a Board of ex-officio and elected Guardians and overseen by Poor Law Commissioners who exercised their supervision through a network of inspectors assigned to different areas. The entire scheme was financed by a Poor Rate struck on the several Electoral Divisions comprising the Union.

Loughrea Poor Law Union was declared on 12 September 1839. It comprised an area of 198,331 statute acres and had a population of 56,057 persons accord-

ing to the 1841 Census. There were 9465 inhabited houses in the Union. A contract for the erection of a workhouse at Loughrea to accommodate 800 persons was placed on 13th January 1840 for an amount of £7000, and the building was ready to receive its first admission of paupers on 24th March 1842.

As already stated, State "assistance" could be given only to inmates of the Workhouses, as these were regarded as the most destitute in the Union, and not until 1847, when these institutions were grossly overcrowded and death from starvation widespread, was outdoor relief finally conceded. Instead, the government's efforts were directed to providing employment in the form of public works, so that the poor could earn money to purchase food. The works were generally of an unproductive nature and many of the schemes survive to this day as 'white elephants', in the shape of unfinished roads that lead nowhere and other useless projects. As the Great Famine became widespread, the public works schemes finally broke down under the staggering load of the starving masses and gratuitous relief was provided in the form of Indian Meal (maize) and soup dispensed from large boilers in 'soup kitchens'.

St. Brendan's Home Loughrea, former Union Workhouse.

The Workhouses

As the famine progressed, overcrowding became a serious problem, and the workhouses became terrible traps for typhus fever and other diseases. At the best of times, life in the workhouse was designed to be 'as disagreeable as was consistent with health', in case anybody might be tempted to sponge on the rates; and there are instances where inmates deliberately committed misdemeanours in workhouses in order to have themselves transferred to the County gaol where the fare was usually superior.

As already mentioned, the workhouse at Loughrea was built to cater for 800

persons. When stavation became acute throughout the Union, destitute persons clamoured for admission and two ancillary buildings were acquired. One of these was known as 'The Bishop's House' at Bride Street; it was rented from Mr. Smith, the Deputy Vice-Chairman of the Board of Guardians; the other was an old building which had previously served as a brewery. We get a good glimpse of the terrible conditions in the workhouse at Loughrea from a report written on the 3rd February 1848 by Dr. Phelan, a Poor Law Inspector who visited the house:-

"The house contained 1127 paupers, 12 of which were in the idiot cells; 76 in the fever sheds; 58 in the infirmary; 60 in the male and female infirm dormitories. All these, making a total of 206, were on the sick list ... This house is in a very unsatisfactory condition. A considerably number of the boys and girls are very badly clad, even those who have house clothing ... a large number have only their own filthy clothes. The dietary of the adults has been insufficient and of bad quality. I examined milk on two successive days which must have contained a considerable proportion of water, but the supply of even this article is very small. The breakfast hitherto has been: 7 oz. Indian meal for adults and 4oz. treacle; 14 oz. brown bread for dinner, with a pint of cocoa. At their breakfast more than half the boys and girls have no spoons; a large proportion of them look very badly, evidently in a reduced condition ... The ventilation of the infirmary and of all parts of the workhouse remains in the same defective state as that in which I before described it.

I found the privies in the most filthy and disgusting state. There were 38 men in the lower probationary ward, all of whom had slept in the upper on the previous night. On going into their proper yard, that connected with the lower ward, I found a considerable quantity of dung, ashes etc. outside the door and the floor of the privy was covered with faeces, some evidently of more than a day's continuance. In the lower female probationary ward there were 75 women and 48 girls and young children. These 123 had slept the previous night in the upper probationary ward, in which there should not be more than about 24 to 30, at most, put. All - men, women etc. - wore their own clothes, and presented an appearance of the most wretched description; want in the case of all, starvation in that of most, was all too evident.

The yard and privy at the female side were still more disgracefully dirty than at the male side. The sight was sufficient to sicken any person, the stench almost sure to do so ... Nearly every part of the house is black from want of whitewashing. No peasant's hut could be more so than the nursery which smoked so as to render it difficult to remain many minutes in it, yet it contained 36 women and 36 infants. In the day-room there were 133 adults when I went through. Several were aged and infirm. All sat on the floor, there was not a form in the room, nor one in the nursery ...'

In another report written some few weeks later, attention was drawn to the unsatisfactory state of the place used as a cemetery:-

'It is a place in every respect unsuited for the purpose; situated on an eminence in a line with, and immediately adjoining the workhouse; a substratum of hard rock so that the graves cannot be sunk to a sufficient depth, and when we came here we found the deceased paupers deposited in shallow pits in the part of the ground most contiguous to the fever sheds; in truth, the dead were

lying in their graves within a few feet of the heads of the living, and with such a deficient quantity of clay to cover their miserable coffins that unless some means are devised to act as an antidote, we apprehend that when the heat of summer shall arrive, disease in its most deadly and concentrated form will develop itself in the locality ... The sewers of the house are everyone out of order. The original plan of forming two cesspools at either side of the house was never properly carried out, and we found two large heaps of manure and a quantity of other putrid substance were accumulated in these cesspools, of course so considerable as to run over the dayrooms, laundry and passages and diffusing the most noxious vapours and the deadliest stench through the entire house'.

Dismissal of the Loughrea Board of Guardians

Under the provisions of an Irish Relief Extension Act in 1847, Boards of Guardians were allowed to give relief to destitute persons outside the workhouse in certain exceptional cases of distress. This was necessary since the workhouses could not accommodate the starving multitudes and overcrowding was giving rise to contagion of all kinds. To facilitate the new arrangements, Relieving Officers had to be appointed in each Union. These would draw up lists of persons entitled to Relief and examine the genuineness or otherwise of applications made to them. Persons entitled to Outdoor Relief were usually widows or families where the husband was disabled by reason of illness or other cause. As late as February 1848, the Loughrea Board of Guardians had not given relief outside the workhouse; their policy was rather to admit to the workhouse all who applied to them for assistance. This led to much tension between the Board and the Poor Law Commissioners. In 1847 it was shown that of 3121 persons admitted, 920 died, or about 28 per cent. 210 deaths occurred between October 1847 and February 1848. The Commissioners stated their apprehension 'that much injury must arise from any furhter admissions' and added that they could not doubt that there must be many others outside, aged and infirm, temporarily ill and widows having children, as well as able-bodied who were destitute. The failure to appoint Relieving Officers and administer Outdoor Relief was obviously an attempt to economise the funds of the Union and thus keep down the rates. When pressed on this point by the Commissioners, some of the more influential and wealthy Guardians declared that if Outdoor Relief were given, they would discharge their own labourers.

John Burke

On 28 December 1847 a man named John Burke who resided at Moyglass was found dead in the woods of Marblehill. His appearance indicated great destitution and it was obvious to those who saw him that he had died of want. Some grains of corn were found in his tobacco box and a note in his pocket from Mr. Redmond Burke, addressed to his brother who was a Guardian, requesting him to procure him admission to the workhouse. The note was dated some days previously.

The Poor Law Commissioners in a comment on the affair, noted that a

Relieving Officer for the district had not yet been appointed and 'they cannot disguise from themselves the possibility that the death of John Burke might have been prevented if the Guardians had not so long delayed to comply with the Commissioners" order for the appointment of Relieving Officers'.

By early February 1848 relations between the Guardians and the Poor Law Commissioners were at a low point. On February 9 Dr. Phelan, a Poor Law Inspector, wrote to the Commissioners that 'I am strongly impressed with the conviction that the Board of Guardians will not carry out the law so as to give in-door and out-door relief to the fit objects which are in need of it'. This was one of a series of complaints received from the inspectors regarding conditions in Loughrea, and on February 9, 1847, the Commissioners by a formal order dissolved the Board and apppointed paid Vice-Guardians to administer the Loughrea Poor Law Union.

Improved Conditions

From the moment the new Vice-Guardians took over, conditions began to improve. The collection of the rates was stepped up. On March 9 the Vice-Guardians wrote to the Commissioners:-

'The auxilary workhouse at the brewery is rapidly approaching to completion. Either of us have personally attended there for a portion of each day urging on the work and we have now sleeping accommodation ready for over 500 persons and on Saturday next we are to have an apartment ready for the male school, in every respect suited for the purpose; we have furniture and fittings ready to put in and have sleeping dormitories and two work-rooms for the trades-boys, all connected with each other, and detached from the yard and portion of the concern appropriated for the adult male paupers. We have also secured the services of an assistant master and we expect to have this branch of the establishment conducted in an efficient manner'.

This account is corroborated by the evidence of Rev. Joseph O'Loughlin, the acting chaplain to the workhouse. Speaking on 22 April 1848, he noted that the paupers were more comfortably clothed and conditions generally were much improved. He considered that the constant visits of the Vice-Guardians had tended to this improvement, in addition to the increased accommodation afforded by the auxiliary houses. The inmates were more generally employed. The females were engaged in spinning, sewing, carding; the female school was much improved.

Conditions throughout the Union

Shortly after their appointment, the Vice-Guardians conducted an investigation of the state of distress throughout the Union. As part of this exercise sworn evidence was taken from selected persons who would be expected to be familiar with conditions in their own immediate districts. Among those who gave evidence was Garrett Burke, rate-collector and under-agent to Sir Thomas Burke, Bart., of Marblehill. His testimony gives us a glimpse of the condition of the people in the spring of 1849:-

'I am well acquainted with the Electoral Divisions of Ballinakill, Duniry,

Portumna and Tynagh, that I have been in almost every house in these divisions in which I collect the rates; there are at least 300 families holding from 4 to 12 acres, on whose land there is neither stock nor corn, nor provision within their houses; they are unable to pay their rates and I do not expect to get any distraint from them before the harvest unles I find grazing cattle during the summer. Holders of land from 12 to 20 acres, to the number of 50, are nearly as destitute, and of the two classes, very few attend chapel for want of decent clothes. The corn sown last year was greater in proportion than that sown this year, but potatoes are being planted extensively. I think the deaths during the last year amounted to one-eighth of the population. I kept an account of the persons that went to America as well as I could learn, and out of the four divisions 300 able-bodied persons went thither. I was for five years manager of a loan fund which amounted to £2,000; when the potato crops failed I called in the money and collected abuot £1,400, the remaining £600 is still unpaid, yet for three years before the potato crop failed there were not 10 defaulters, nor was a summons ever served to enforce payment.

There are about 20 gentlemen residing in the divisions, six of whom give employment to the poor.

The destitution of the district will amount to 5,000 at the lowest calculation, at the present the number relieved amounts to 2,144, upon the outdoor lists, as appeared upon the books of relieving officers'.

James Martyn Lynch of Loughrea, late rate collector for No. 1 District, comprising the electoral divisions of Loughrea, Kilchreest and Killeenadeema, was another who testified before the Enquiry. His evidence was taken on 31 May 1848.

'I am well acquainted with the three electoral divisions and I truly swear that the destitution this year is three-fourths greater than it was last year, something more in Loughrea than in the other two divisions. I consider the destitution arises from want of employment for the people; from several heads of families having died last year, leaving their widows and families without any support; from the failure of the potato crop; and from the inability of numbers last year to sow a crop of any kind... with the exception of a tan-yard in Loughrea there is not another manufactory in the three divisions and this employs but four or five hands ... up to Christmas there had been a brewery, which is now converted into an auxiliary workhouse. The clothing of the people who possess land from five acres downwards is as bad as can be, with few exceptions; and on this account very many are prevented from attending worhip on Sabbath days. I have seen but one weaver at work; wheels, reels, cards are all idle for want of means to purchase materials to manufacture linen, frieze and blankets for the use of the people themselves and they are literally naked for want of such'.

In Portumna

Conditions in the electoral division of Portumna were described by the Rev. Thomas Burke, Parish Priest. In the town of Portumna, with the aid of Mr. Ryan, the Resident Magistrate, he had succeeded in setting up a woollen factory where 110 females, having 475 individuals in their families, were employed until April 1848, but the industry fell through due to lack of demand. Since the

failure of the potato crop, wheaten meal was the general diet of the people; the food of the poor was chiefly turnips with a little meal shaken thereon as long as the supply lasted. Now it was principally rye meal. As regards the clothing of the people, they were in a very destitute condition generally speaking, and to such an extent as to be confined to their homes.

Effects of the Famine

The effects of the Great Famine on almost all aspects of Irish life were profound. Even to the present time traces remain in the shape of old ruins where villages once stood; or old potato ridges overgrown with grass on neglected mountain slopes. But nowhere is the devastation more starkly presented than in the Census figures for 1841 and 1851. in those ten years 3076 homes in the Loughrea Poor Law Union became uninhabited as death and emigration reduced the population by 17,922 persons.

Logainmeacha agus Seanchas na Gráige

Eighneachán Ó Laighin

Ceann de na tréithe is taitneamhaí i nduine ar bith é a bheith dílis dá dhúchas agus dá chine. Tá an dílseacht sin go tréan i muintir na Gráige. Cibé áit a gcastar iad, ar fud na hÉireann nó ar fud na cruinne, tá siad bródúil as an áit inar scail an solas orthu de chéad uair.

Baile beag seanda is ea an Ghráig féin, é suite go seascair faoi scáth Shliabh Luchtgha. Fágfaidh mé faoi dhaoine is léannta ná mé féin a stair a ríomh. Gráig na Muilte Iarainn a bhímis a thabhairt air ar feadh i bhfad, ach is cosúil gurb é an t-ainm a bhí fadó air an Ghráig, sular tosaíodh riamh ar iarann a bhaint sa gceantar.

D'fhéadfá a rá is dóigh gur cuid den bhaile Barkhill mar a bhfuil teach an phobail, an reilig, an dá scoil agus an clochar. Níl fhios agam cén bunús atá leis an ainm. An féidir gur truailliú é ar Barr na Coille. Deir Mícheál Ó Conaill sa leabhairín breá sin **Cineál Féichín agus Síol Anmachadha** go bhfuil Ard na Cairte ar áit sa gcomharsanacht. Bhíodh cairt na daraí á húsáid le leathar a leasú. An aon áit amháin iad? Taobh ó dheas den bhaile tá réimse tíre a bhfuil Sliabh Uilleog air. Cérbh é Uilleog a d'fhág a ainm ar an sliabh? Búrcach, b'fhéidir. Bhíodh, agus tá, an t-ainm sin ag gabháil leis and Búrcaigh. Deirtear gur amach an bealach sin a chuaigh an Sáirséalach ar a bhealach ó Eachdhroim go dtí Luimneach.

Ní fhios go barrainneach cén uair a lonnaíodh i dtosach sa taobh tíre arb é paróiste na Gráige anois é. Ach tá cruthúnas go raibh cónaí san áit i bhfad roimh ré na Críostaíochta, suas le trí mhíle bliain ó shin, nó b'fhéidir níos túisce fós. Is deacair a shamhlú anois cén chuma a bhí ar an gceantar nuair a tháinig na chéad daoine isteach le cur fúthu ann, gan claí ná fál, bóthar ná teach le feiceáil. Bheadh fhios agat, áfach, ó na hainmneacha a baisteadh ar na bailte fearainn cérbh iad na gnéithe aiceanta is mó ar tugadh suntas dóibh. Crainn agus coillte na nithe ba shuntasaí ar fad. Tá sin follasach ón méid áiteanna a bhfuil an focal 'doire' nó 'coill' nó 'ros' ina chuid díobh. Bhí na doirí, nó na

coillte daraí, ann go dtí an séú nó an seachtú céad déag nuair a baineadh iad le fiodhghual a dhéanamh le haghaidh tionscal ar iarainn.

Abair gur anoir a tháinig na chéad áititheoirí sin. Ceann de na háiteanna is túisce a chonaic siad, tar éis Cluain Maolán Beag agus Móin na Cíbe a chur díobh. Doire Bhunloim, mar a thug na Ceithre Máistrí air, cé gur dóigh le daoine eile gur Doire an Bhonndaláin a ainm ceart. Bonndalán, sin sórt giolcach a fhásas i gcoillte. Ach Doire Bhunloim díreach a thugadh na seandaoine air le linn m'óige-se.

I ndeireadh an 16ú agus i dtosach an 17ú céad bhí dhá aicme de na Búrcaigh ag troid mar gheall ar an oidhreacht agus tháinig Réamonn de Búrca agus arm fear leis chomh fada le Doire Bhunloim. Cibé cén t-achar a chaith siad ann chreach siad na bailte fearainn go léir máguaird. Ghluaiseadar ó dheas ansin ach buaileadh i gcath iad agus tháinig siad ar ais an bealach céanna agus chuireadar fúthu arís i nDoire Bhunloim. Deirtear go raibh na pubaill a bhí acu ann i dtosach go raibh siad fós ina seasamh ar fhilleadh dóibh. Chuir Risteard de Búrca, mac an Iarla, an campa faoi léigear agus buíon Sasanach de chúnamh aige ach d'éirigh le Réamonn agus a chuid fear éalú.

In aice le Doire Bhunloim, i dtreo na Mainistreach, tá Leachain, is é sin leirg sléibhe, mar a bhfuil reilig agus tobar beannaithe, Tobar Féichín.

Tá mé mearaithe ag an ainm Doire Ghill. Sin an leagan oifigiúil atá ar an áit. Ní thuigim a bhrí ach Doir' Aoil an fhuaim a chuala mé riamh ar an ainm. Gar go leor do baile na Gráige atá Doire Creag. Tá tobar beannaithe eile ansin agus dhéanadh daoine turas ann go dtí le roinnt blianta ó shin ach níl fhios agam an ndéantar fós é.

Píosa taobh ó dheas de bhaile na Gráige, in aice le teorainn an Chláir, tá Doire Gualann, guala sléibhe is dóigh. Agus ná déanaimis dearmad ar Dhoire Iurbhair ar an mbóthar idir Doire Bhunloim agus an Cuas atá gar do theorainn an Chláir chomh maith. Is dóigh go raibh crainn iurbhair fairsing ann i dteannta na gcrann daraí.

Tá scéal i Leabhar Buí Lecain faoi na filí a théadh ó Loch Ríbh go Luimneach agus b'fheidir gurb é sin an bealach a thĕidís, idir an sliabh agus an tSionainn. Duine acu, Flann Mac Lonáin, file Connachtach atá curtha thall i dTír dhá Ghlas, tháinig sé ar ais ó na mairbh, dar leis an scéal, le dán a dhéanamh ag moladh áilleacht Shliabh Eachtgha.

Nuair a fhágfas tú Doire Bhunloim ar an turas sin tiocfaidh tú go dtí Ros Dora, Barr an Doire, Cluain Có, Luascán, Eochaille (na crainn arís) agus Goirtíní.

Tá 'Cluainte' againn. Cluain a bhíodh ar mhóinéar nó ar thalamh féarmhar ar bith. Má chasann tú ó dheas ag Crois an Phaoraigh i dtreo na Sionainne - ní thugaimidne choíche ach an tSionainn ar Loch Deirgdheirc - tá tú i mbaile fearainn Chluain Maolán. Cé go bhfuil muintir Mhaoláin fréamhaithe ansin leis na cianta is é mo dhóigh mar sin féin gur as na cnocáin mhaola a ainmníodh an áit. Tagann tú ansin go dtí na Bánta agus Cluain dá Dhamh. Tá sean-chaisleán ansin ba leis na Búrcaigh fadó agus ba leis na Búrcaigh go dtí le gairid an talamh atá timpeall air. Is minic a chuala mé caint ar chluiche mór iománaíochta a imríodh ansin, go láidir os cionn céad bliain ó shin, idir Gaillimh agus Tiobraid Árann, foirne áitiúla is dóigh. Creig an t-ainm atá ag muintir na háite ar Chluain dá Dhamh. Thaispeánfaidís carraig ollmhór duit a chaith Fionn Mac

Cumhaill le laoch eicínt eile nach raibh sé mór leis san am. Níl sé ráite cé acu a bhuail nó nár bhuail sé an céile comhraic ach is ansin a thuirling an charraig.

Ó dheas leat fós agus tiocfaidh tú go dtí an Srath. Tá an scoil a bhíodh ansin dúnta anois, faraor. Ba í an triú scoil í a bhí sa mbaile fearainn sin, ceann acu i bhfad roimh ré na scoileanna náisiúnta. Tá béaloideas faoi chath a troideadh ag ceann thoir an bhaile sin, ar bhruach na Sionainne, am eicínt i lár an chéid seo caite idir fir na háite agus díorma fear a tháinig anall ó Thiobraid Árann i mbáid iomartha. Ach níl mé in ann a rá, ach an oiread leis an seanfhear sa dán a scríobh Southey faoi chath Blenheim, céard ba chúis leis an troid. Ar a laghad bhí fhios ag Kaspar cé a ghnóthaigh. Easaontas, b'fhéidir, a tharla ar aonach nó ar bháire agus gur socraíodh ar é a throid amach ansin. B'fhéidir nach raibh ann ach dúshlán - bhíodh daoine ag feachaint a chéile an tráth sin gan mórán ábhair.

In uachtar an chéad bhaile fearainn eile, Cluain Uan, ar imeall an phortaigh, tá clais ghainimh ar a dtugtar Sebastopol, áit ar fearadh troid mhór bataí aimsir Chogadh na Crimé. Bhí acmhainn ghrinn acu dá dhonacht dá raibh an saol. Tá láthair seanscoile i gCluain Uan freisin. Tá páirc de chuid mhuintir Cheallaigh a dtugtar an **Schoolhouse Field** uirthí, scoil scairte is dóigh.

Ní féidir baile fearainn a thabhairt an Ghort an Ghainimh mar níl ann ach an reilig. Idir sin agus an tSionainn arís tá an Ros Mór agus Coill na Meala. Taobh thall den abhainn bheag a théann amach sa loch tá Dubhros, an choill dorcha. Bhí sé sa mbéaloideas go bhféadfadh duine dul as sin go Port Omna tráth gan teacht anuas as na craobhacha.

Má théann tú ó Dhubhros ag déanamh ar Luascán is iad na bailte a fheicfeas tú Ros an Solais, an Bán Mór agus an Dromainn. Tá cáil ar an Dromainn mar gur ann a bhí Dún Sándair inar cuireadh suas cosaint fhada in aghaidh na mbáillí le linn Chogadh na Talún. Bhíodh dhá cheárta in Áth an Eas, idir an Dromainn agus Ros an tSolais agus mise i mo ghasúr ach níl cling le cloisteáil as ceachtar acu anois.

Táimid ar ais i Luascán, áit stairiúil eile. Is ann a bhí cónaí an "Dochtúir" Tully, dearg-namhaid na dtiarnaí agus na mbáillí céad bliain ó shin. Rinneadh cosaint ar a theach ach cuireadh as seilbh é sa deireadh. Tá teach pobail deas i Luascán a tógadh tuairim is céad go leith bliain ó shin. Bhí ceann roimhe sin tuairim is leathmhíle ó láthair i gCluain Có agus tugann daoine fós Séipéal Chluain Có, **Clonco Chapel,** ar Shéipéal Luascáin. Idir Cluain Có agus an Ghráig atá Both Leac.

Buaile áit a gcuirtear na ba amach ar féarach sa Samhradh. Ach tá brí eile leis an bhfocal, is é sin, áit a dtugtar na ba isteach lena mbleán, sórt bábhún. Idir Luascán agus an Ros Mór atá an Bhuaile Mhór. As páirc mhór in aice na habhann a ainmníodh an áit agus is móinéar anois í agus bíonn sí á sealbhú i gcoiteannas ag teaghlaigh an bhaile. Áit a bhfuil ainm aisteach go leor air Buaile na Nollag. D'fhéadfá na ba a fhágáil ar buaile ann go Nollaig, dar leis an Seoigheach. Céard faoi Bhuaile na Brón? An brò mhuilinn a fágadh sa mbuaile a thug a ainm dó?

Ré atá ar réimse de thalamh cothrom agus tá réite sa gceantar s'againne. Tá an Ré Rua, Ré Bhuí, Ré na Fleisce, Ré na gCloch Breac, Ré and Droma Fhada agus Ré an Chlampair. Cén clampar é, níl fhios agam, a thug a ainm don áit sin?

Ceann, b'fhéidir, mar an gceann ar chum Patrick Kavanagh an dán beag gleoite sin "Epic" faoi.

Níos faide amach tá Aillin Dara - an dair arís - Sceach na hInse, Tuar Leitreach. Tuar, sin áit a gcuirtí éadach amach le triomú agus le tuaradh agus leitir, sin leirg cnoic.

Deirtear gur thug Raifteri cuairt tráth ar an gceann thiar den pharóiste agus go bhfuair sé óstaíocht ann tigh Shuibhne. Fíodóir de bhunadh Ultach ab ea an Suibhneach seo. Ar aon nós rinne Raifteri dán á mholadh agus ag moladh cheird na fíordóireachta. Ní hé sin an leagan atá ag an gCraoibhí ar an scéal. Dar leis-sean gur chum Suibhneach eile dán ag dímholadh na bhfíodóirí agus gur á fhreagairt a bhí Raifteri. Sa dán a rinne Raifteri ag moladh Mháire ní Eidhin as Cill Tartain deir sé:

Dá mbeinnse pósta le bláth na hóige
Trí Loch an Tóraic do leanfainn í,
Cuanta is cóstaí do shiúlfainn is bóithre
I ndiaidh na seoid-mhná atá i mBail' Uí Liagh.

Ní shílim go dtuigeann duine ar bith cén bunús atá lies an ainm Lorc an Tóraic, ach b'fhéidir gur Loch an tSúraic é ó cheart chuala mé go bhfuil abhainn faoi thalamh ann.

Thángamar isteach i mbaile na Gráige as Cluain Có agus an bealach sin. Má théimid amach as sa treo eile tiocfaimid go dtí an Cnocán Carrach, Leathchoill, Poll na gCnocán agus an Ceapach, nó Droimeann na Muclach má ghlacaimid an bóthar íochtarach, agus ar ais go dtí Doire Bhunloim arís.

Tá an chuaird déanta agus is maith is eol dom nach bhfuil cuntas tugtha ar gach uile áit sa bparóiste agus go bhfuil béaloideas agus seanchas go leor nach bhfuil curtha síos. Má léann aon duine é seo agus gur mian leis aon rud a chur leis ba bhreá liom scéala a fháil uaidh.

The G.A.A. and Nationalism in East Galway

by Sam Stanley

The reader will appreciate from the title of this brief essay that it is not a comprehensive study of the G.A.A. and Nationalism in Woodford and East Galway. Such must await a later date. It is intended here to attempt to take the wraps off the development of the G.A.A. during the eviction years, and to assess the influence of the Independent and Nationalist spirit of the Association, and the role of the G.A.A. in assisting the Nationalist cause.

Boundaries

In 1854 Galway stretched to the Bow River south of Mountshannon. The Barony of Leitrim extended from Kilreekil to Mountshannon and included both villages. The Barony incorporated all or part of eight parishes totalling 120,185 acres. Of this, the massive parish of Ballinakill contained 59,606 acres - half the Barony. In later years this area was greatly reduced when Whitegate and Mountshannon (Clonrush) were ceded to Co. Clare. During eviction years

the parish stretched from Lawlor's Cross, Kylebrack to Coose. There was no parish of Woodford until the 20th century. It was an electoral district of nine townlands, but naturally much of the surrounding area was referred to as Woodford just as the parish of Lickmolassy was referred to by its principal populated area, Portumna. Eaglehill, Abbey, Abbeyville, Coolfin and other 'Abbey' townlands were also in Ballinakill.

The G.A.A. — Infant Years

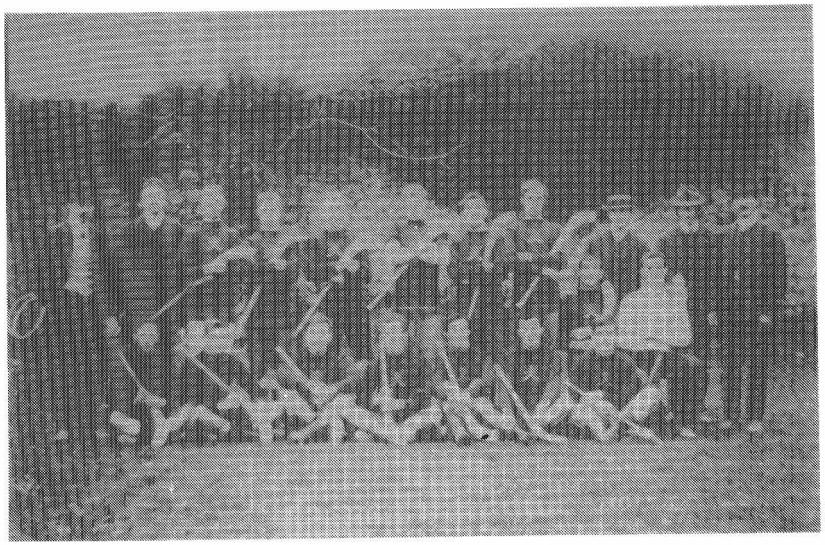
The G.A.A. in its early years found itself struggling to achieve its aims on a wide or efficient scale. County Championships rarely took place. Games were almost totally run on a tournament and challenge basis. Fixtures were erratic; absenteeism was rife and central organisation was often slap-dash, sometimes non-existent. The Agrarian and National causes on the other hand, were rock-solid under the banner of the Irish National League. The 'Times' reported in 1887: 'In Woodford the National Leaguers have matters all their own way ... the district is at present time the best organised in Ireland'. Captain Hamilton, head of the landlords' Property Defence Association, reported to the Cowper Commission in 1887: 'The combination begun at Woodford is spreading very generally over Galway'. The June 1888 Report of the Crime Department Special Branch ran: 'It is strange that the G.A.A., which is developing in every district of Galway ... has made no progress in Woodford ...'. The reasons were simple; many of the young men were in jail; the rest were too occupied with the agrarian war and the evictions. Most of Woodford was on the Clanricarde estate; Ballinakill, on Henry Burke's.

Cusack's G.A.A. founded in 1884 for 'the preservation and cultivation of our national pastimes', came at an opportune time. The rack-rents, evictions and imprisonments brought a massive groundswell of reaction and of nationalism. The G.A.A. was a vehicle on which much of this national feeling could ride and thrive. In a symbiotic manner, both prospered. The leaders of the National League became G.A.A. officers and organisers, giving it much thrust and impetus; the G.A.A. helped spread the national spirit by offering perfect occasions for mass meetings and demonstrations. Most G.A.A. matches and meetings were accompanied by rousing speeches and motions of nationalistic import, urging independence and land reform. Behind the scenes the I.R.B. thrived, recruiting and preparing for insurrection against British rule, which at this time extended over one quarter of the world.

1884 - 1890

These were good years for the spread of the games and there was little dissent. There were two reasons for the good beginning. (i) The clergy gratefully accepted the G.A.A., because of its healthy and vigorous outdoor activity and Gaelic character. (ii) The independence movement poured already well-trained organisers into the official ranks of the G.A.A.

The clergy sought to win the youth of Ireland over from the secret oath-bound and Fenian-fostered I.R.B. with its revolutionary drill and practices. Their initial love of the G.A.A. often faded, when they failed to stop the I.R.B.



The Woodford Hurling team, 1914.

infiltrating and in great part controlling it. While the power-struggle went on in official circles the games flourished all over south-East Galway (hurling), and North Galway (football). In December 1884 Ballinakill, under its Captain, Thomas Tully, challenged the mighty Killimor which included Tynagh. They failed by two goals at Feagh on 6 January 1885. The prize was £10. Tully again led Ballinakill to the County Semi-final against Craughwell at Loughrea in 1889. Craughwell were also too strong. In June 1890, a great football and hurling tournament was held in D'Arcy's field at Curra. John Derevan of Fairy Cottage led Tynagh against Ballinakill. He had previously captained Killimor. How many Woodford men helped their parish in these games is still not known. What is certain is that some of its National League leaders were prominent in the G.A.A.. John Roche attended meetings. Pat McDermott of Derrygoolin, evicted, jailed and later elected M.P. for Kilkenny was appointed by Galway Co. Committee to represent the county at the National Convention in Thurles in 1888. Martin M. Egan, brother of Woodford's firebrand curate and 'combination' leader, organised the first National League meeting in Ballinakill on Sunday September 13 1885. He 'battled' against Henry Burke's Colonel Comyn at Marblehill. In July 1889 he became Co. Board Secretary to the G.A.A.. Nicholas Larkin, prominent in the agrarian war and Tim Fox were G.A.A. leaders. Peter Kelly of Killeenadeema became the G.A.A.'s second National President. The R.I.C. had a file on Kelly; he was staunchly I.R.B.. Most of the Galway delegates to Congress and National Conventions were I.R.B. men. This caused the clerical/nationalist split in the G.A.A.. This split was soon widened by the publication of Parnell's 'illicit' life with Mrs. O'Shea to the detriment of the G.A.A.. In 1889, the Tories, dismayed at the thought of a Liberal victory and the inevitability of Home Rule, induced O'Shea to seek

divorce. Katherine O'Shea had been living as wife with Parnell since 1880. The Hierarchy issued a pastoral in 1890 condemning Parnell, and the G.A.A. was caught in the clergy/nationalist crossfire and suffered greatly in Galway. 'The hurling match is seen no more'.

1890 - 1899

Matters had been bad enough in Woodford; they were worse now. The massive police presence in this 'trouble-spot' had an intimidating and dampening effect. Over seventy officers were stationed in Woodford and they haunted every meeting and gathering, suspicious of and hostile to every nationalist movement, which was seen as a menace to Law and Order and a danger to Unity. They harrassed at every match. When Hickson, R.M. proclaimed the Tynagh Tournament billed for Skehanagh in 1889, one hundred police took over the pitch. The games, with a strong Woodford/Ballinakill presence, had to be played at Ballylean.

The second and by far the greatest impediment to G.A.A. progress in Woodford was the absence of players. The scale of ejectments and evictions was enormous; the number of jailings even worse. 1886 saw almost one hundred jailed; 1890 saw over one hundred sent away to Galway and Kilkenny jails. There were varying lesser but persistent imprisonments in the intervening years. There were few other than old or middle-aged men with the women and children, left to partake in sport. Now the Parnell split plagued the infant G.A.A.. In the 1890's the I.R.B.-dominated County Committee refused to affiliate anti-Parnell clubs, one of which was Dr. Duggan's own Belclare. These affiliations were refused because such clubs were 'too political', and the G.A.A. was non-political (Nationalist only!). Affiliations collapsed in South-East Galway. Only Galway City and surrounding districts, and North Galway were actively involved in G.A.A. games centrally organised.

The Parnell Split

Many clubs had been active, prominent and growing between 1884 and 1890 Meelick, sponsored and encouraged by Lord ffrench, Peterswell, the broad-based Killimor/Tynagh club and even Ballinakill after the Henry Burke capitulation on the rents in 1886. Now in 1890 the Hierarchy issued an anti-Parnell Pastoral and the old Fenian Matt Harris died. In response to the Pastoral, the Co. Committee did two things at its December meeting. (i) It appointed an all-I.R.B. delegation under President Peter Kelly to attend a National Conventoin in Dublin to encourage Parnell in defiance of the clergy. (ii) It issued a statement: 'We pledge ourselves to stand by him (Parnell) while we have a shot in the locker'.

When Parnell came to Galway in 1891, dozens of clubs paraded in colours to receive him. The Convention of the G.A.A. in Dublin in July 1981 strengthened the I.R.B. and pro-Parnell hold over the Association, reconfirming opposition under their great National Leader to British rule. Parnell died in October and was given a massive G.A.A. and Nationalist funeral and widespread mourning. The Lion had gone and with him, much heart. 1892 and 1893 saw the G.A.A. in Galway in a state of disintegration. Almost all the officers

elected at the 1893 Co. Convention were new faces from North Galway. The 'U.S. Invasion' of 1888 and the now free land in Australia, incurred massive emigration. When Owen Broderick of Douras was evicted in August 1886, his costs were £17.10s; his arrears, £16.10s. Now such men could take the Monarch Line to the New World of plenty for £3.16s. Only the son chosen to inherit the farm stayed at home, to try to wrench a living from a grudging soggy land. When the landlord, the shopkeeper and the Church were paid, the tenant was still in debt. These years and factors such as the Parnell split saw previously low-profile clubs like Loughrea, Portumna and Laurencetown, being joined by Kilimor, Tynagh, Meelick, Ballinakill, Ardrahan, Peterswell on the absentee list.

The 'Removable' Clifford Lloyd R.M. had vowed to 'make the grass grow on the streets of Loughrea'. Grabbers were 'back-handed' to inform on G.A.A. officers, many of whom were jailed. Martin M. Egan, very dear to the people of Duniry, Woodford and Ballinakill resigned in 1891 as Co. Secretary. Clubs, torn between loyalty to their clergy who had fought their cause with the landlords, and to the great national leaders who had been evicted and jailed, made themselves conspicuous by their absolute absence. 1894 saw the G.A.A. continue to refuse affilation to 'anti-Parnell' clubs. 1895 was a 'dead letter' and 1896 saw little recovery. The thought of an 1898 Centenary celebration of the Rising of 1798 caused interest and increased activity in 1897. However, Congress ruled that the G.A.A. was 'non political' and the 1798 Centenary Committee's request for a big celebration was not getting very far. The power of the clergy was at length being felt. Galway Co. Board however, asked for affiliation in honour of the great centenary. In from the cold came Duniry, Woodford, Peterswell, Ballindereen and many others. The G.A.A. however was slow to celebrate and so in 1899 and 1900 and in the following years, the I.R.B. and the Fenians slowly left the G.A.A. ranks, not to emerge again until 1913 in Eoin O'Duffy's Volunteers. They held five positions on the Commitee which included Liam Mellows and Con Colbert. In the U.S. under John Devoy's Clan na Gael, the I.R.B. were flourishing and bristling, and in March of 1916 offered Padraig Pearse 20,000 rifles and ten million rounds of ammunition.

At home in 1900 the Parish rule was settled - one parish, one club and no crossing of borders which had been common before. When Fr. John Bowes was appointed to succeed Fr. Costello at Looscaun in July 1901, it was no longer ecclesiastically at least, the parish of Ballinakill. By now the G.A.A. was once again finding its feet, although it would take another twenty years to steady fully on them. There were still evictions, imprisonments; there was a world war and the 1916 Rebellion; there were the Black and Tans and the Civil War - all major hindrances and obstacles.

In Woodford, Edward Shaw Tener was still dishing out Clanricarde 'justice' and that infamous recluse was not bought out until 1915. Lewis of Ballingar and Burke of Marble Hill had flown. As the 20th Century unfurled its years to better times, the people of Woodford found time for Cusack's 'leisure', 'freedom from pressing business'. The R.I.C. were being transferred from the 'hotbed of Irish politics'. The men who 'had broken in twain the galling chain' of British landlords' bondage, now joined to form the anvil upon which the G.A.A. in Woodford was hammered out, moulded and tempered. Organisation, comradeship and brotherliness had won the fight. The evictions and jail sentences

were behind; the land they had reclaimed, drained and ploughed was their own; the mass haemorrage of emigration had abated. And so the young heroes of a proud parish, aided by a fair wind, were set fair to gambol on the Elysian Fields of sport, and gain the greatest respect and the highest honours in their playing of the games. The clouds of thirty years of 'Hell on Earth' had passed to see:

'The sun shine down on Woodford Bay
Beneath its heath'ry hills
And its rippling waters flowing 'neath
The bridge by the rustic mills'.

Over a period of five years 1913-1918 Woodford defeated Ardrahan, Gort, Claregalway, the Army, Peterswell, Craughwell and Kilconieran. In the 1914 All-Ireland hurling Final (played in fact in 1915) Galway were beaten by Clare. Later in that year (1915) the All-Ireland Champions, Clare, were defeated by a Galway team which included **eight** Woodford players! 'Brod' picked his own Galway teams during some of those years and spoke glowingly of players from Ardrahan, Leitrim, Gort, Peterswell and Kilconieran. Short seven of his original selection, Galway were narrowly defeated by Cork in the All-Ireland Final of 1917. The Co. Chairman said to him afterwards, 'Stanley, if you had your team here to-day you'd wipe the field with Cork!'. The Asian flu of 1918 finished the Woodford team.

Before finishing with the lines from Michael Power's ballad, may we forever remember and thank all the great East Galway men of those traumatic years. Men of great heart never die.

Woodford's Hurling Team 1914

From Woodford town of old renown, went our sturdy team one day,
From the hillside brown the streams rushed down, Barkhill beside the bay.
We're proud of you, brave hurlers true, we're proud our parish bore you,
Throughout the soil of Erin's Isle, you have beaten all before you.
Could I lines unfold like Moore of old, were I Thackeray or Byron,
I would sing for you the praises due, for twice beating Kilconoiron!
On the Loughrea train, one day again, we went with pride and joy,
To view our fifteen hurling men, in the town of Athenry.
We reached the station midst animation, of both the East and West,
From Woodford Bay to Claregalway, we were known to be the best.
But to decide it on the field we tried it, neath Summer's scorching sun,
In weather glorious we were victorious, now we've the County's honours won.
The whistle sounded, the ball was grounded, Stanley found it and sent it high,
While opponents feared him, all men cheered him, on the Gaelic fields of Athenry.

He is straight and tall and admired by all, you could compare him to no other.
You could Ireland pick to rival Dick, our gallant captain's brother.
With the Coens in back we fear no attack, from German, Greek or Turk,
Submarine or bomb, let Zepplins come, they'll be manned by Conroy and Burke.

The Fahys three and Jack Grady, are worthy of our attention,
With Kelly and Page on the fullforward stage, the Gormans here we'll mention.
Now we have named our team that was famed, in North, South, East & West,
On that bright June day, when all Galway did say, Woodford are again the County's best.
If on those lines you muse, I pray you'll excuse, if the composer has been unruly,
For in haste did he stitch these lines on the ditch, and as ever he remains yours truly.

Michael Power (Powerscross)

Flora and Natural History

Thomas Gorman

While a detailed description of the natural history of the district is best left to the expert, a few words may be said about features of a more general interest.

The pine marten (cat crainn), the rarest of the Irish mammals, has been sighted on a number of occasions in the woods around Woodford, and one was caught and presented to the Dublin Zoo some years ago.

The Woodford and Lough Derg region is of particular interest to botanists, since a number of large ants, flowers, shrubs and trees found there are uncommon elsewhere in Ireland. There is also a striking contrast between the flora of the northern and southern halves of the Lough, owing to the abrupt transition from underlying limestome to Silurian/Old Red Sandstone.

Two wild flowers in particular should be noted. Apart from the western counties of Ireland, the Bue-eyed Grass (Sisyrinchium bermudiana) is found as a native (i.e. not artificially introduced by man) only in North America. The first discovery of this flower in Ireland was made near Woodford, by the Rev. James Lynam, in 1845. It occurs in rough, damp ground about the Woodford River and northward, as well as at Scariff and on the Tipperary shore opposite.

A yellow flower of the sunflower type, the Irish Fleabane or the Willow-leaved Inula (Inula salicina), occurs on the rocky limestone shores and islands of the northern half of Lough Derg, southwards from Portumna on both the Galway and Tipperary sides. While it is native to Continental Europe and Asia, it is found nowhere else in Ireland or Britain. It was first found in Ireland, on the lakeshore near Woodford, by David Morse in 1843.

Other plants, rare in Ireland, include Calamagrostis epigejos at Loughatorick Lake, and Cephalanthera ensifolis in Derryvunlam Wood.

A remnant of the once very extensive oak forests of Woodford survives at Derryvunlam Wood.

On the slope of the Scalp, close to Ardeevin, is a cave known formerly as Poll a' Mhadra or Scealp a' Mhadra, (presumably the madra rua or fox) but more commonly known as the Danes' Den or Fox's Den, with the usual legends about the fate awaiting those rash enough to venture in.

In Shrah, at a distance from the lake shore, are a number of limestone rocks, curiously weathered away to the shape of mushrooms. Whether these are any indication of a former level of the lake, must be left for the geologists to determine. Uncommon birds have also been sighted locally, including a cream-coloured thrush by Mrs. Tony Egan Woodford (see "Land and Water", The Irish Press, June 2nd. 1986).

Too Late

Dan Lyons, S.D.B.

There's a salmon in the pool
Below the weir,
Below the weir,
There's a salmon in the pool
Deep and clear;
There's a poacher idling nigh
And he has a business eye -
Oh, my salmon in the pool
Do you hear?

Take my tip, my kingly traveller,
In your pool
By the weir,
Waste no time, put ground between you
And the weir;
For that poacher mean and sly
With the calculating eye
Will be back, by and by
Never fear.

Ah! too late, my silver beauty
In the pool
By the weir.
Oh, you should have heard my warning
And kept clear.
For the deadly spear struck swiftly
And the gaff was handled deftly -
Now he has you wrapped in rushes
By the weir.

Hely Dutton Survey 1824

Tomás Ó Gorman

Under a scheme promoted by the Royal Dublin Society, Mr. Hely Dutton, who had earlier, in 1808, produced a survey of County Clare, published, in 1824, "A Statistical and Agricultural Survey of the County of Galway".

The work contains a great deal of fascinating information on a vanished era, which at times seems to be separated from present-day conditions, by much more than a mere century and a half. On the other hand, some things never change: when Hely Dutton complains of the reluctance of the gentlemen and clergy of Galway to reply to his written questionnaires, and that his only hope of extracting information was to confront the individuals concerned in direct conversation, his remarks might have been written last week.

The reader is treated also to lengthy discourses setting out the author's pronounced views on such subjects as the best methods of draining and manuring land, and planting trees. Improved techniques of agriculture was a topic very much in the air at the time.

Hely Dutton has much to say also about the consequences of the collapse of agricultural prices, following the end of the Napoleonic Wars.

A few brief local references are reproduced below.

- "Chalybeate (iron) wells abound ... One at a short distance from Woodford has been used with great success, and has been analized by Dr. Donnelan of Portumna; one of great repute near the white gate on the estate of Mr Burke of Tintrim. In the same neighbourhood, at the village of Quose, on Lord Clanricarde's estate, a well that instantly kills all poultry that drink of it ... another at Killimor much used".

- "Oxen are not generally used in this country in husbandry. The following gentlemen, amongst perhaps a few others, use them in most kinds of work: Sir John Burke of Marble Hill ... Lord Riverston ..."

- "There was also a flourishing linen manufacture established by the late Rt. Hon. Denis Daly, at Mount Shannon, but when he sold that estate the linen manufacture went to ruin. A great deal of linens are made at Woodford, which are esteemed better than those of Loughrea".

- "An immense pineaster tree may be seen (1803) at Killeen, in the parish of Ballinakill, the estate of Sir John Burke.

Hedge Schools

by Michael Mac Mahon

After the collapse of Limerick in 1691 and the flight of the "Wild Geese", a penal code was introduced against catholics. Its purpose was - in the words of Parliament - to more effectively "settle Ireland upon a Protestant interest". Amongst other things, catholics were debarred from becoming tutors or teachers, and any person who sent his chld to be instructed in the 'popish religion' was liable to forfeit his property. By an Act of Parliament in 1745 every teacher was required to have a licence from the Protestant bishop and to take the Oath of Allegiance. Those who did not apply were forced underground and remained in insecurity until Catholic Emanicipation in 1829.

Despite those penal measures however, the clandestine schools, or hedge schools as they were called, remained the dominant element in catholic eduation throughout the 18th century. They survived right down to the first half of the following century, until the government was forced to interfere and introduce a State system of Primary Education in 1831.

The introduction of the Primary Education system was preceded in 1826 by "An Enquiry into the State of Education in Ireland" and that Report provides us with a glimpse of the hedge schools then existing in the parish. The Report sets out the income of the Master or Mistress, together with a description of the school, the cost thereof and the annual income of the teacher.

Woodford:	Edward Kelly R.C.; 66 pupils, a thatched house; cost about ten shillings. Master's annual income: £20.
	Patrick Magan (McGann?) R.C.; annual income: £10; A thatched house; cost £4.
Toorleitra:	John Collins held a school for 86 pupils in a thatched house which cost £4. His annual income was £4.
Gorteeny:	Michael Tully taught 85 pupils in "a thatched cabin". His annual income varied from £10 to £15.
Clonoon:	Michael Kemple held a school for 62 pupils in "a miserable hut" for an annual income of £7.
Rosturra:	Daniel Slattery taught 71 pupils in a thatched house costing £6. Annual income £8 to £10.
Knockadrum:	Laurence Murphy taught 68 pupils in the chapel at Ballinakill. His income ranged from £15 to £21.
Abbey:	John Lee taught 91 pupils in the chapel at "Abbey Kinelehin attached to a suppressed monastery". His annual income ranged from £15 to £21.
Tooreen:	Martin Ward; 58 pupils. A thatched house; cost £10.
Moyglass:	John Egan, 59 pupils; a small thatched cabin; cost £3. Annual income £15.

In addition to the foregoing, Samuel and Emily Corner (Turner?) taught a school at Woodford under the auspices of the Kildare Place Society. It was described as a thatched house costing £10 and was attended by 20 pupils of the Protestant Religion. The Kildare Place Society insisted on Scripture reading in their schools and forbade all national references. The schools were thus regarded as anti-catholic and anti-national, and never attracted more than a small trickle of Catholic children.

Traditional Music in East Galway

by Martin Fahy

(a) Dinny Lynch and Pupils

On Saturday, April 19th, 1986, Mrs. Mary Conroy of Rossmore, Woodford, went to her eternal reward, and with her went memories and impressions of Dinny Lynch, "the sweetest traditional fiddler" she ever knew. She had recollections of learning her first notes on a little old fiddle that Dinny brought to her, when she was a seven year old daughter of Master Canning N.T., Shragh.

Dinny was a native of Kilrush, and lived for some time in Bodyke and later at Whitegate, where he took lessons on the violin from a professional musician, Miss Malone who taught the children of the local gentry. According to local

tradition, they had played together at one of the Harvest Festivals, and on recognizing Dinny's untroubled skills as a traditional fiddler, she taught him the higher violin positions, and how to play classical pieces in the various keys. Dinny spent the rest of his life (1899-1920) along the Shannonside from Rossmore to Clonmoylan, where he in turn became a renowned music teacher and outstanding fiddler. Though unfortunately, he was never recorded, and was completely blind since birth, all his pupils agree that he has had no equal yet in this century. He played at all the dances and parties around Lough Derg, from Portumna to Kilbarron, and from Woodford to Scariff. Among his fellow-musicians was Charles Stanley Snr., who then had a bakery in Woodford, opposite the Larkin Hall and now Michael Moroney's. Dinny taught several of the younger Stanleys, including Sam, Joseph, Charles Jnr. and Richard, who later became an accomplished violin-maker at his home in Ballinderry, Co. Tipperary, after being a baker in Feakle Lawrencetown and Scariff previously. Sam had a bakery in Lorrha before emigrating to Southampton, and eventually New York, where he also became well known as a musician. Charles Stanley Jr., or Brod as he was known, was probably Dinny's best known pupil, until his death in 1970. In 1954, he established the first branch of C.C.E. west of the Shannon, and played with his fellow-musicians Connie Hogan, Concertina, and Jim & Johnny Conroy, Flutes, at the Cavan All-Ireland Fleadh Ceol in 1954. An accomplished traditional fiddler, Brod played at concerts and weddings far and wide with the great musicians of East-Galway and North-East Clare, such as Michael (Barrel) Rafferty, Tommy Whelan, Paddy Moloney and Tommy Whyte, Ballinakill, Paddy Kelly, Aughrim, and many others. Later the Woodford C.C.E. branch was called "Craobh Donncha Ui Loinsigh" to commemorate that master exponent of the Galway-Clare style of fiddle playing. In 1969 it organized the first Mummer's Feile in Woodford on St. Stephen's Day, an annual event ever since, and a great mecca for traditional musicians from all over. A remarkable feature of the music scene in East-Galway, were the weekly or nightly sessions held in certain houses, where all instrumentalists were always welcome, and music often lasted until the early hours.

(b) Music Homes & Bands

Brod Stanley's home in Woodford was such a house of music, and besides regulars, like the Conroy brothers and Connie Hogan, were Fr. Charlie and Jack Coen, both now in New York, Fr. P.J. Kelly, Lahore, India, Martin Woods, Mountshannon, Joe and Kathleen Burke, Loughrea, and the late Aggie Whyte, Martin Grace and a host of other locals, too numerous to mention here. Jim Downey's house in Leitrim was always a haunt for musicians from that area, including Joe Burke and young Paddy Downey, who practiced together there for hours. It was here that the Leitrim Ceili Band was formed, and Tony Molloy, Ned Coleman, and Jack Dervan were the earlier members, along with Joe Burke and Paddy Downey. East-Galway has indeed produced many outstanding musicians from the legendary pipers, Patsy Touhy, Bookeen, Dinny Delaney, Ballinasloe, to the late moderns like Joe Cooley, Peterswell, Kevin Keegan, Tirenascragh, Sean McGlynn, Tynagh, all well

known in the U.S.A.. At home Eddie Moloney (De Danann) and many others still living here, keep the musical traditions alive, like Paddy Carthy, Loughrea, the Rolands, Roxboro, the Treacys, Cappataggle, McLernons, Killimor, Eddie Kelly, Eyrecourt, and Paddy Fahy, Kilconnell. Indeed, Kilabeg House, Kilconnell, the home of Paddy Fahy, became another great centre for traditional music, and led to the formation of the famed Aughrim Slopes Ceili Band, which still survives under Paddy's sister, Jenny Campbell, Kiltormer. Other East Galway Ceili Bands were the Killimor and Abbey Bands, the latter being all comprised of Conroys - related, though from four different families. Another great musical family, made up Sean Dohohue's band from Tynagh, with two brothers and five sisters, including gifted folk singer, Brigid. A new era had been born. South East Galway had experienced a renaissance in traditional music. The parishes of Abbey, Duniry, Tynagh and Killeen took up the clarion. Famous family names like Conroys, Donohues, Donnellys, Larkins, Brodericks, Broders, Tarpeys, Felles, Hallorans, Collins, Quirkes & Jennings were added to the never ending list. They have left behind a unique heritage - a stored treasure of the out-pouring of the Gael, as old and endearing as the Irish race itself.

(c) History of Music in Ballinakill

If the walls of my house resound with the strains of "The Pipe on the Hob" and the "Maid Among the Roses" it is surely those of Carraroe, Ballinakill, for it was here in 1928 that the celebrated 'old' Ballinakill Band was formed. At the time Miss Anna Rafferty lived in Carraroe House, and it was here over forty years ago that the late Fr. Larkin, P.P., put into practice his boyhood ambitions when he brought a group of musicians together and formed the Ballinakill Ceili Band, or the Ballinakill Traditional Players, their original name.

From this humble beginning they went on to achieve success, not alone in

BALLINAKILL BAND (1929)
Left to right, Stephen Moloney (Flute), Tommy Whyte (Fiddle), Gerry Moloney (Tynagh), Tommy Whelan (Flute), Anna Rafferty (Piano).

Ireland but in England, where the fame of their music had gone before them in the numerous recordings they made. The founder members were Miss Anna Rafferty, late of Rathgar, Dublin; Stephen Maloney, Tommy Whelan (flutes), Tommy Whyte, Jerry Maloney (fiddles). Those five members travelled the length and breadth of the land, and across the Irish sea without change of personnel.

Throughout the Winter of 1928-29 the Band practised and perfected itself, played at local functions, and in a short time the name "Ballinakill" became synonymous with Ceili music. Through the invitation of a lady piper, the Band was selected to play at Féis Ath Luám sponsored by the military stationed there, and where the Costume Barracks Belt was annually danced for. As was customary in those days, the Band that played for the dancing also played at the Ceili afterwards, and it was here that the Ballinakill Band got its first major break.

Radio in 1929

Seamus Clandillon, first Director of 2. R.N. - (as Radio Eireann was then known) - was a great authority on folk music, and engaged the Band to make a live broadcast on November 1st, 1929. Their selection was broken into two sections, timed for 7.30 and 10.30. Incidentally, the Ballaghadereen Singers, who were waiting for their own broadcast, heard the Band through and cheered as they finished their recital.

After this special broadcast, the Band met the members of the Tír na nOg Trio, Leo Rowsome, Neilus Cronin of Cork and Seamus O'Mahony, who were practising for their own broadcast, and a get-together at the hotel was arranged for the following night.

In July, 1930, Parlophone of London had the Band make two records, consisting of "The Pipe on the Hob", "The Old Bush Reel", "The Queen of the Rushes" and "Copperplate Reel". Sales from these records surpassed all expectations, and on 17th November 1931, the whole Band was invited by Parlophone to London to make six double-sided records.

Between 1931-'34 they continued to fulfill local engagements, Ceilithe, Feiseanna and Concerts in places like Ballinasloe, Mountbellew, Clifden, Spiddal College, Athlone, Mount Shannon, Labane, Killanena and Limerick. By then other Ceili Bands like the Aughrim Slopes and the Austin Stack were springing up, and traditional music was enjoying a new lease of life.

Played for Alfie Byrne

In January, 1934, after a broadcast in Radio Eireann, the members were guests of honour of the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Alfie Byrne. Incidentally, the Lady Mayoress, Mrs. Byrne, a cousin of the Heagney family of Carrowcrin, had spent some seasons there as a child, and was a classmate of Fr. Larkin, at Duniry National School.

In 1938 a second trip to London took place, this time with two new members, Aggie Whyte and Kevin Maloney. On St. Patrick's night they played in the Olympia Theatre, Earl's Court, and on their return to Dublin they recorded further times, including "Eileen Curran" and "Sandmount Reels".

Another highlight of the Band's career was their role as guests of honour at the coming-of-age party of the present Lord Killanin at his residence outside Spiddal, a few weeks before the outbreak of the Second World War.

By 1941-'42 the Ballinakill Ceili Band had reached international fame, and sales from their records amounted to tens of thousands. For fourteen years they had worked together, building up a reputation which the passing years could not tarnish. By 1942, when travelling became difficult, the "Old" Ballinakill Band had reached its well-earned rest.

An interesting feature was the absence of a drummer. Instead, they had a pianist, Miss Rafferty herself, who paced and added background, rhythm and richness to their music.

When these original members retired from public life, they passed on their music to their sons and daughters, and it was this new combination of Aggie and Bridie Whyte, Eddie Maloney, Jack Coughlan, Martin Grace, Tom Rourke and Jim Hogan that was chosen in 1951 by American folklorist Alan Lomax, in collaboration with Seamus Ennis, to play the background music for a ballad opera, "Story of Tory", written by him for production on B.B.C.

Again the Band personnel underwent a change, and by the turn of the 60's it was composed of Ambrose Maloney, Eva Whelan, M.B. Tierney, Ned McDonnell, and Brendan Hogan. Emulating the tradition of their elders they, too, were proud standard bearers of Ballinakill Music at the Irish Club, London.

Dear old Woodford Town
(To the Air of My Irish Jaunting Car)

Jim Stanley C.Ss.R.

I am a man from Ireland and Woodford is my home.
There's no a spot in all the earth, that I would rather roam.
A place of gentle people, of history and renown,
Of scenic sights and wild delights, is dear old Woodford town.

Refrain

Oh, travelling along in a jaunting car by the ancient iron mill;
From Upperforge to Lowertown, up the Ben and down Rockhill.
The Silvermines with the Devil's Bit and the forests all around;
These you can view and the Shannon too, from dear old Woodford town.

II

Lough Atorick lake is famed for trout, there's deer in Derrycrag.
Swerving snipe in Drumeen Bán, hare and pheasant in Bolag.
Wild, wild geese in the winter sky, and the cackling grouse so brown;
A paradise for sportsmen, is dear old Woodford town.

Refrain III

The scenic beauties of the West, are praised by the poet's pen,
And Gaelic fields record the deeds, of gallant Galway men.
We have hurlers and heroes, too, who fought against the crown;
They took a stand for Ireland, in dear old Woodford town.

Refrain IV

Some people now for a change of air, go far across the main,
To see the sights and scenery of Greece or sunny Spain.
But if I only had my way, they would not be foreign bound,
Until they'd trod my native sod, in dear old Woodford town.

Refrain

(Local Traditions)

Tomás Ó Gormáin

Note: The original material, as written or copied out in the handwriting of the individual national school pupils, and with the names of the older persons from whom the information was obtained, is still preserved and is available for inspection, in the library of the Department of Irish Folklore (Roinn Bhéaloidis Éireann), UCD, Belfield, Dublin, with whose kind permission the above brief summary notes have been prepared. The replies to the school questionnaires contain, as well as material of a historical or semi-historical nature, much information of a more specifically "folklore" character - beliefs, superstitions, good luck and ill-luck "cures", charms and spells, fairies, ghosts etc. The following brief notes refer to some of the local traditions collected in response to a Folklore Commission questionnaire organised through the national schools in 1938/39.

Tanning: Said to have preceded iron works in Woodford. 1838 map shows sites of tanneries in Woodford and Clare. Small pits in woods around Woodford, and stone vat at Toher Wood, used for small-scale tanning.

Salt: Manufactured for a short time in Woodford after ironworks closed.

Iron: Mostly exported to England, but some domestic utensils also made. Later, iron ore was dug up in Lowertown, for export to England, where it was used in the production of gas.

Clogs: Made from birch trees in Derrycrag, by an Englishman, Myles Crawford, sent to Britain for finishing, returned to Woodford for sale.

Nailmaking: By Kearys, Woodford; probably connected with ironworks.

Barkyard: Oak trees felled in Kylagowan, bark stripped, dried and sent to Limerick for use in tanning.

Woollen and line weaving: linen industry set up by Daly family in Mount Shannon (formerly known as Mount Shannon Daly). Flax and linen use practised by Ultachs. McDermott's tuck mill at Reynclamper. Flax weaving by John

Sweeney - Barkhill, Pat Tuohy - Upper Forge, William Allen - Loughatorick, and in Killimor.

Spinning wheels: Anne Keon - and John Goonan, Derrygoolin; John Broder Pat Quinn, Clonmoylan.

Poitín: Martin Donlon, Loughatorick; Derryoober ("stillhouse"); islands in Lough Derg.

Domestic and candle making: tin and iron moulds used.

Sarsfield: On his retreat to Limerick after the battle of Aughrim, passed through Newtown, Ballinagar and Woodford; when passing by Piper's Pier, Derrycrag, dumped his heavy guns in a pool in the wood; mounted some guns at ring fort in Cloncoe for defence. Seven standing stones at Laught, north of Woodford, known as the Seven Stones, mark the graves of 7 of his soldiers. Old road to Mountshannon is known as Sarsfield's Road.

Ring forts (fairy forts): Ballingar, Cloncoe, Oghilly, Derryoober, Liss (2), Lagoo, Barnaboy, Tomany, Lisheen (Rossmors). Legend that forts contain gold treasure and are guarded by a black cat. Many more ring forts are shown on 1838 map, especially in Ballinakill area.

Crannógs (lake dwellings): 5 or 6 in Ballinlough Lake, one in Loughatorick Lake (unrecorded) with zigzag approach paths (stone) to be seen in shallow water.

Caves: Danes' Den, on Scalp mountain, near Ardeevin (Poll Bradach, in Toureen, Rhinenabochala, Loughatorick); tunnel near Marble Hill House (? ice house).

Monuments and cairns: Stone in Liss, with imprint of St. Patrick's knee; Upright stone, resembling a man, in Knockroe, known as Carrickbreaga; Rock on top of hill in Lowertown, known as Earl's Chair, because an Earl of Clanricarde used to picnic there when fowling; Priest's Cairn in Toorleitra, dated 1810, where priest from Woodford perished in bad weather; Two cairns in Derrycrag Wood marking place where two men were murdered.

Cromlechs: 6 cromlechs ("giants' graves") and "Druids' Altar" in grounds of Marble Hill (large upright stones with flat stone on top).

Ruins: Ballinakill Castle, stories of Nóra na gCaisleán; Ballinakill Church; Cineál Fhéichín; Coolfin Castle ("... about two weeks ago the stones of it were drawn out to the crusher".); Clondagoff Castle, book of prophecies of Ireland found there, which nobody could translate; lights seen in castle at night, because of a bishop who was killed there; site of castle on island of Douras; site of castle on island off Clonmoylan; ? site of church near Douras churchyard.

Old graveyards (some): Drim (Lisín Glas), Lagoo, Marble Hill, Ahanass, Derrygoolin, Killahaun (Loughatorick), used mainly for unbaptised infants and a few adults, no longer in use.

Holy wells: Cineál Fhéichín (Abbey), formerly visited between 15 August and 15 September; Curra (Tobermicduagh); Marble Hill (St. Colman Mac Duagh); Ballingar; Derrycrag, visits on last three Saturdays of July; Ahanass, St. Anne, visits on evenings in May.

Roads, bridges: Old Woodford-Mountshannon road known as Mailcoach Road: two mail-car services to and from hotel in Woodford; Green Road at Wastelands; new Wastelands road built as famine relief work; side road to Boulia where goods from Limerick etc. were unloaded from boats on

Bronze Skillet Pot.

Rossmore River and carted to Woodford; fords and stepping-stones shown at various points on 1838 map: Loughatorick road being built 1838.

Penal Days: priest used Danes' Den as hiding place at time when "Probers" Page, priest hunter, was active in district; priests were sheltered, and said Mass, at Burkes of Cloncoe and Connollys of Shannon Hill; former thatched church, with Mass rock, at Cnocán Uí Each, Loughatorick, priest came on horseback from Cloncoe; former church at Chapel Hill, Cloncoe; 1835 - churches at Knockadrien, Cloncoe, "Lockatory" and Marble Hill.

Shops: at Cnocán Uí Each and Derryoober.

Horse races: Woodford; Curra (man shot and killed there once); Killimor; Tubbernagat (Scariff); Knockbarron, near Loughrea.

Tithes: collection of tithes by tithe proctor, and resistance offered to him.

Terries (Terry Alts); coming from Clare at night, raiding for arms or seeking to enlist recruits, or to have more grazing land set for conacre; house windows barred as protection against them; dug up Matt White's lawn, Ballycorban, Easter 1831 ("bliain na dTerries").

Hedge schools etc.: hedge school at Derryoober (? Gorteeny), walls still visible, teacher Carroll; at King's Hall overlooking Woodford, teacher Power from Power's Cross, wife kept shop; in house (now in ruins) in Lowertown; by Protestant, Robert Turner, in own house (later Hennessy's) in Woodford); Martin Power (? or Burke) taught in Cappicon, Lowertown and Ballygowan; at Derrygoolin commonage, teacher William J. Corrigan from Cloughjordan, till National School built in 1900; Ned Kelly taught at Cloonoon, and later at Cloncoe; near site of Shrah National School, teacher Annie Heron (Mrs. Nicholas Dillon); Teachers in National School, Mrs. Dillon, Corney Clarke, Connolly from Loughrea and Michael Canning from Whitegate; at the Rock, at crossroads on way to Toorleira; at Garvey's old walls, Loughatorick; National School built 1863; at Ballinamona, near Kylebrack, teacher Smiley; Wastelands school built 1845 by the Irish Wasteland Company, a Scottish undertaking; every household had an Irish cathechism, and the old people went

to the church and taught it to the children, together with prayers in Irish (Wastelands).

Famine: many people died by roadside and were buried without coffins; Some people got cholera from eating rotten potatoes, and were buried near where they lived, since neighbours were afraid to approach because of the disease; account of group of men in shop at Barratoor, seeing a girl from the mountain carrying her mother's body on her back to bury it in the graveyard near Drim school, and going out to help her with the burial; Indian meal porridge provided by authorities in boilers at Campbells of Ballinakill, distributed by parish priest, people came long distances with cans for it; some blamed guano, introduced in 1846, for the crop failure.

Fenians: supply of guns brought from Loughrea, used for drilling locally, eventually buried in bog below Derryoober.

Nolan/Trench election 1872: the Burkes of Marble Hill evicted some tenants for voting for Nolan.

Night of Big Wind 1839: John Nevin, going to Mass, killed by falling branch of tree, body covered under cock of hay; Dance in house in Derryvunlam kept going until wind began to strip thatch from roof.

Bogburst, Loughatorick 1890: partially filled in Ballinlough Lake; some people could get turf in their own yards the following summer.

Hurling: old-style game, played on big pitches, like Boulia (one competitor shoulder-charged into river alongside) or Riasc Gharbh (Slaughty), or across parish boundaries. 20 to 40 players a side, wearing different-coloured caps. No goalposts, but fences, drains or other marks were used. To carry the ball past the opposing end-line counted as a score. Tripping permitted. Big match between Woodford and Ballinakill.

Black Pig: according to an old prophecy the coming of the Black Pig would be the signal for war, when the Orangemen would wade knee deep in the Catholics' blood, except that "from Binn to Bow No blood shall flow" *(See Prophecy of Orange Invasion)*.

Orange Invasion Prophecy

Preface

This area of East Galway is rife with these 'prophecies', and Fr. Cathal Stanley C.C. Kileen has collected various versions of them from different sources in Clare and East Galway, including Doyen Ring, Gurteeny and John Broderick, Gurrane, Tynagh, whose remarkable memory he salutes. Further versions or additions are always welcome from readers. The original prophecy is said to have come from a Dominican monk, who belonged to the Priory at Boula, Portumna. Given below is one general version of the prophecy without too many detailed local references, which vary, from area to area in East Galway.

Columcilles Prophecy on the Invading Orangemen

The Galls (British) will gradually become disillusioned with the North of Ireland Unionists, and eventually another 'agreement' will be signed between Ire-

land and Great Britain in relation to the six counties. Before the ink has dried on this new Anglo-Irish agreement, however, one million Orangement will march across the border into Donegal, and proceed to devastate, burn and slaughter everything in their path. Riding horseback through the five counties of Connacht and later into Co. Clare, they will destroy much of the west of Ireland and its inhabitants and property, including towns, buildings, churches, and farmsteads. The wise man will burn his own house, and hide himself and his family in the rubble, to deceive the advancing loyalists, who will think that they had been there already; otherwise he will flee across the Shannon, bringing a stocking full of oaten meal for his family on the journey. The Orangemen will eventually stop at Kilmeen Cross outside Loughrea, where the 'stream of Kilmean will flow red with blood'. Meanwhile, an Irish army will march across from the Curragh etc., and crossing the Shannon at Portumna, they will stop to prepare for battle just east of the village of Tynagh, while the Orangemen advance towards Tynagh from the Loughrea or western side. The first battle in the so called Valley of the Black Pig will be fought mainly in the village of Tynagh: "when Lock an Búi meets Loch an Earrach" that is, when the two small lakes at either end of the village meet, though not in water but in blood, which terrible conflict will be won by the marauding Orangemen. The survivors on the Irish side will then retreat towards Woodford and the Sliabh Aughty Mountains, obviously pursued by the victorious men from the North as far as the Benn Hill, which separates the Parishes of Tynagh, Abbey, and Ballinakill from Woodford. According to the prophecy:

"From Benn to Bow,
No blood shall flow".

and this seems to refer to both the Benn Hill, which is part of the Sliabh Aughty range, and the Bow River that flows into the River Shannon between Scarriff and Mountshannon opposite Red Island, in Lough Derg, and which rises near Derrygoolin and the Scalp Mountain peak, in the heart of the Sliabh Aughty. Defeated at the battle of the Benn Hill from marching triumphantly forward in Woodford direction, the Orangemen will instead march around the Sliabh Aughty Mountains via Gort and into Co. Clare for the first time, where they will resume their reign of terror, all over the Banner County. The final encounter will take place in Kilchreest, "at the bridge with the seven eyes", and present will be a priest with the initial C (three recent Priests there, were Fathers Coen, Canavan, and Connor) to lead the Catholic army.

"The Orangemen will lose this battle, and the result will be peace in the whole of Ireland, North and South, with a united land and people".

Cathal Stanley

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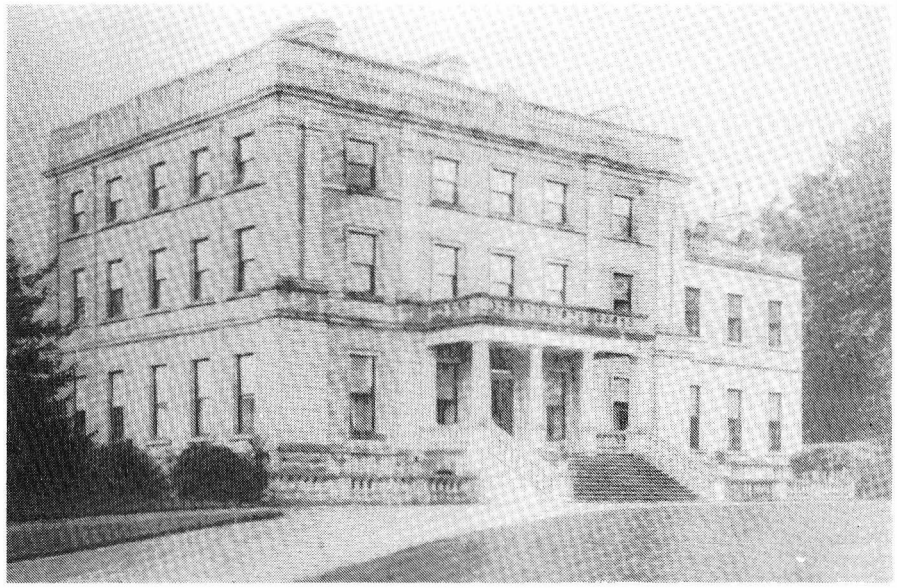
NOTE: The origins of hurling in South-East Galway, and how it evolved into the first set of rules and the formation of the GAA movement, is a major subject for further research and publication. In August 1854, Gort represented Galway against Offaly in a hurling match played in Athlone, and the game was very strong there when Michael Cusack arrived to teach in that area of Lough Cutra. In 1882, he was presented with "The Killimor Rules" by Patrick Larkin, and together with Frank Lynch, Springvale and William Duffy, Loughrea, they arranged a meeting with Bishop Duggan of Clonfert, from which emerged the birth of the GAA in 1884.



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